

# LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

[May 1, 1870.]

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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 362.—VOL. XIV.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 9, 1870.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[UNMASKED.]

## EMERALD AND RUBY, WITH A DIAMOND HEART.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Golden Apple," "Miss Arlingcourt's Will," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

LITTLE Tib had still the confidence and affection of all the family. She had in no wise failed in the faithfulness and gratitude which she had promised them at first. Every added day made her dearer and more necessary to the enjoyment of that cheery family circle. But Mrs. Black was growing a trifle uneasy about the child,—not because she grew prettier and prettier, the complexion taking on a clear transparency that was too waxy to be healthy, and the blue eyes growing so brilliant, for all that purple haze that was almost always hanging over the pupil, for Mrs. Black, despite her quick, affectionate impulses, was hardly clear-eyed enough to interpret these,—but on account of the nervous starts, the long abstractions, the continually watchful look which grew more and more distinct on the sweet face as the days slipped into weeks, and the weeks into the second month.

She had been as blithe as any summer bird or frolicsome child, this little Tib, until lately, and Mrs. Black's anxiety questioned how and wherefore had the change come. Yet somehow she shrank from appealing to the girl herself, but she watched her narrowly.

"Elizabeth, dear child, sit still and rest, or go out and take a run in the fields," she said, one warm afternoon, as her little maiden brought out the work-basket and her thimble into the cool sitting-room.

"I had rather sew than sit idle, thank you, if you will only talk, and tell me some of your pleasant stories," answered Tib. "A pleasant one this afternoon, please."

"Do I ever tell any but pleasant ones?" asked Mrs. Black, playfully.

Tib's smile was rather faint, and the downcast lids hid a gathering dew.

"Not always. That one about Miss Wise's friends, the queer sea-captain and his good wife and their lost son has haunted me ever since."

"And yet it was Andrew's gain, you see. A rare chance, indeed, for Andrew!"

"Yes, I understood it better after you told me the story. I see that he is a rich gentleman now," she answered, bending her head over her work. "And you think, or rather you say Miss Wise thinks, he will take the drowned son's place in everything?"

"Why, yes, that's what she told me. I've a suspicion Miss Wise don't like Andrew as well as the rest of us. She has a way of clipping his name between her teeth when she speaks it that makes me think of the snap of a pair of scissors. She said, 'I suppose he'll take that pretty Rose Henderson as well as the fortune. Some folks have a marvellous faculty for appropriation.' And Miss Wise ought to know. She's very intimate there, and they think a deal of her."

"Rose Henderson!" sighed Tib, softly; "it is a lovely name, too, and she is like it. I suppose she has grown up just like a rose in a garden, only knowing about beautiful things, and having no understanding that some poor little plants have to grow in the damp shade, or struggle up through chinks of wall, and snatch at all the sunshine that peeps through in feeble rays. I suppose all her life she has had servants to wait upon her, and beautiful clothes to wear, and plenty of people to love and praise her?"

She looked up as she asked this with a feverish interest in the answer.

"Yes, I suppose so, of course; Miss Wise said they were rich."

"It seems so strange to me," murmured Tib, "to think there is anyone put into a life that seems so much like a paradise. I don't suppose she gives a thought to even the making of her clothes?"

"Oh, no indeed," replied the farmer's wife, smiling at the simplicity of the question.

"And so she cannot think much about it that so many beautiful things come to her, no more than the rose does about the sunshine, and the dew, and the sweet June air, but just takes it as natural as I did my work, and want, and forlornness. She will not be surprised either that Andrew loves her."

There was a wistful pathos in the tone that startled Mrs. Black.

"Good gracious! now I understand it. Miss Wise was right when she told me to discourage Andrew Courtney's acquaintance with Tib. Poor little soul! I do believe I know what ails her."

Meanwhile Tib stretched on, pausing now and then to look off out of the window, with an occasional little catch of breath that might have been a sob had she given it permission.

"Elizabeth, my dear," said Mrs. Black, presently, after one or two hems to clear her throat, "do you know I've got a notion you are not as happy as you were at first? Is there anything on your mind you could tell me and feel the better for it, my child? I'd listen just as I would want somebody else to listen to my little Jenny, if I was taken away."

Tib looked up in a wild, frightened way. "Anything to tell? Oh, no, Mrs. Black. What should a humble little servant girl like me have to tell, unless it's her thoughts, and they are too wild and foolish to be listened to."

Mrs. Black hardly ventured to urge more at this time. A dead silence followed. And then Tib folded up her work a little nervously and rose.

"If you please I think I should like to go out in the fields, Mrs. Black. The grass will be so cool and fresh."

"I would, child; I've no doubt it will do you good."

And so Tib brought her saccue, and the hat Andrew had given her, and put them on before the little looking-glass. She smiled slowly and pensively into the face reflected there. It was not an ugly face. Andrew had called it pretty many and many a time. Tib even ventured to think it might have looked as well as the one she had seen twice the week before

smiling into Andrew Courtney's, if only there had been the same rich lace decorations, and fluttering snow of plumage and tasteful attires for accompaniment.

She went down the highway, and then turned in at the lane that led down to the pasture rock, as it was called, a pretty, romantic spot where the cattle came for water. There was a broad, deep pool, edged with clean, white stones, and into this, trickling over a little dam, poured the limpid water of the brook that crept so stealthily through the waving grasses of the meadow.

Mrs. Black did not know why Tib had spent so many of the warm summer evenings here. How should she guess that two or three times a week, after the dulness of the circle at the Happy Harbour, Andrew had solaced himself by an exhilarating gallop with Donna, and soothed his vain and selfish soul in the warmth and delight of Tib's homage and adoration? For Andrew had especially charged the girl to refrain from any mention of the fact, and the guileless creature would almost as soon have thought of disputing her bible, as of questioning the wisdom and uprightness of Andrew's advice.

She had waited here of late often and often, fruitlessly, grieved, disappointed, but still unquestioning his truth and goodness. Mrs. Black's garrulous talk about Rose Henderson had introduced a new and startling suggestion. Then, one day she saw Andrew and Rose whirling along in the stylish little open carriage.

She shrank at the sight as if a lightning flash had scathed her eyes. Then came the far-away look in her face, and the abstracted thoughts, and little Tib vaguely guessing something, and able to imagine still more, stopped across the miserable threshold, and could no longer be a careless, happy child, but had bent her forehead to the baptismal touch of womanhood, and an awe came into the inheritance of woman's care, and grief, and weakness.

Tib sat down a moment in the lovely little meadow, and looked about her with wistful, sorrowful eyes. Thoughts came, however, which stung her into restlessness. She sprang up, pulled a moment irresolutely at the hanging sprays of foliage, and then hurried out into the highway and walked forward, not with any definite destination in view, and yet animated by a vague hope of meeting Andrew, even though she might have no opportunity of speaking with him. Fortune favoured her. While she was sitting on the mossy stone that made the rustic trysting place at the fork of two roads, running, one to the principal village of the vicinity, and the other to an extensive farm, Andrew Courtney, driving very swiftly and alone in the light open carriage, came dashing around the curve.

Tib sprang up with a little cry of joy.

The spirited horse shied, and pranced a little, but was shortly reined up, and Andrew having recognised her, called back hastily,

"Tib, child, is it you? Do you want a ride? Come on, then."

And the girl hurried forward, and received such assistance in reaching the seat as a carelessly extended hand could give.

"You came up like a ghost out of the ground. I didn't blame Donna for starting. What were you doing here, Tib?"

She hung her head, a vivid colour drifting into the pale cheek, and was silent.

He laughed lightly.

"Did you know I had passed? Watching for me to come back—oh, Tib? You like me a little, my little girl, don't you?"

A sudden sparkle on her cheek from the overflowing tears gave him the first intimation that her mood was more intense and serious than usual.

They were driving on a retired country road, and the nearest espionage that could come must have been from the farm-houses whose roofs peeped here and there from embowering trees on hill and valley.

Andrew put his arm around her unhesitatingly, and drew the sweet agitated face close to his shoulder.

"Why, little Tib, what is the matter? Have you had any trouble at the Black's?"

"No, oh no," sobbed Tib, "they are too kind. I know all the time it was too beautiful."

"What is the trouble, then, you foolish little thing? You were as happy as a little princess that lovely evening I met you down at the pool."

"Oh, yes, I know it, but I have been thinking it might be wrong," faltered she, between tears and blushes, quite resolute he should not have a single glimpse of her face.

"Wrong? What, for me to kiss you, and love you, when we are such old friends, and good friends? Oh! prydish little simpleton! can't you find anything better than that to cry about?"

And he laughed again, long and heartily.

Tib shivered, for the first time unconvinced by Andrew's logic.

He tried to get her hand, but she held it firmly to her side, and then at last she lifted her face, and turned it so that he could see it, with those innocent, almost solemn eyes full upon his, and she came out with her question so suddenly, with such grave emphasis, that he was too startled to be able to frame any of his ready sophistry for answer.

"Andrew, are you going to marry Miss Henderson? Mrs. Black heard that you were."

He sat convicted before her, dumb and confused. Tib did not sob or weep, she made a little womanly movement, and stretched out her hand authoritatively.

"Stop the horse, Andrew! I want to get out."

By this time he had recovered his assurance.

"You silly little Tib. I do believe you are jealous; well, this is a good one!"

"I don't think it is good," burst forth poor Tib, impetuously. "I think it very cruel and wicked. Oh, Andrew, you know so much, and I so little! How could you let me be deceived? How could you be willing to spoil all my life for me?"

"What do you mean, Tib? What absurd old woman has been talking with you?" he returned, angrily. "I should like to know what I have done? I am not married—I am not even engaged to Miss Henderson."

"And shan't you ever be? Oh, Andrew, wasn't it true what Miss Wise said?" cried Tib, with a little quiver of hope in her voice.

"Miss Wise! In the name of confusion how came she to find you out? You didn't go and tell her about our meetings, I hope?" he exclaimed, in a tone of deep annoyance.

"There is no fear I should tell anyone," replied Tib, in deep humiliation, "though Heaven knows I did not see all the wrong or shame of it until—her voice faltered, and was thick with pain and grief—"until that last night, when you said so much that I knew there ought to be more still said, or the whole would be wrong."

Andrew looked down into the girl's face with a curious sensation, as if it was an entirely new identity reigning there behind the familiar features.

He faltered out something of this idea.

"Why, Tib, what in the world has changed you so much? It does not seem as if it could be you! I did not think you would ever seem so unfriendly to me."

"Not unfriendly to you, sir, to myself. I am what a pitiful lies before my feet, that is all. And though maybe it is too late for me to go back, I can stand still and take no further step. I am a poor girl, without any relations to look after me, and you will be rich and grand and great. You ought never to have kissed me, Andrew—you ought never—"

But here her voice failed, and she covered her face with both hands.

Andrew was really troubled and concerned.

"Why, Tib, dear child," he began.

The wet eyes were lifted to flash indignantly upon him.

"I am not a child, Andrew, you have taught me to know a woman's shame and grief."

"Now you are foolish and over nice, Tib," he repeated earnestly; "there is no harm done, none at all. Perhaps I was too hasty, and said more than was strictly true, the other night. I had been tormented and troubled all that day, and it was as sweet and restful to meet you. I always liked you, little Tib, you know that. I confess I was not wise or prudent. But you ought to forgive me a little, Tib. I have tried to be kind to you."

Tib's lip quivered. Kind! yes, kind while he had stabbed her to the heart. She realised it all now.

"You always liked me, Andrew, but you will love someone else," she said sorrowfully.

"Shall I! I declare I don't know. To tell you the truth, Tib, I believe I come far nearer to loving you than Rose Henderson. I am very sure I shan't love her in anything like the lover style, but I suppose I shall marry her."

The girl only sighed.

"Now, then, let us be friends again," he pursued, "good friends, and nothing more. We won't have any more meetings at the pool, though I shall miss them. But I will give you all the help you need, and—sometimes, you know, when you are married to a nice good fellow, you will need a sitting up at housekeeping, and I shall be able to give it to you. So it's all right, isn't it, Tib?"

She stood up and held up her hand for him to stop the horse.

Andrew obeyed mechanically, half frightened at the set, white look of her face.

She slipped down, and stood once more upon the ground, and this seemed to give her power to lift her head, for it rose haughtily almost, and again the blue

eyes flashed. Scorn and indignation both were in the glance. At last she had learned to measure him by the true standard.

Not a word came from her lips.

"There's no harm done. It is all right now, isn't it, Tib?" he asked again, in a pleading, humble tone.

Still not a word. Cold, and white, and rigid, she stood there looking at him, only the eye seemed to hold vitality and life.

Andrew shook the reins, and drove on, muttering, "I think I am tormented in all directions now. I'll ask Rose Henderson to marry me, this very evening, and settle that matter. I'll ask her as we're coming home from the ride."

But he turned and glanced back over his shoulder, and saw her standing there still, the pretty girlish figure, for all its rigidity, poised in an attitude of faultless grace, the short golden curls blowing across the sweet, pale face, and the great blue eyes never turning from their bright, pursuing look. To his dying day that figure haunted Andrew Courtney's vision, as he saw it then for the last time, and the remembrance of those shining eyes brought a shudder amidst the brightest or happiest scenes.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Leo's cry had brought everybody within call to the door, or the balcony, and what everybody beheld was a young lady springing forth from the front seat of a handsome carriage, her proud, patrician-looking face convulsed with agitation, while she rushed forward to meet the boy who had leaped over the railing and swung down by the tall pillar to the ground.

"Leo—oh, my darling Leo!"

"Bertha, my lost Bertha!" were the agitated exclamations, intermixed with a series of little passionate embraces and hurried kisses.

"What—what! Why, Miss Bertha, whatever does this mean?" exclaimed the haughty gentleman, who held the reins, and rather nervously curbed in the prancing horse.

"My dear child," remonstrated the rich, even voice of the handsome brunette lady on the rear seat, "try and calm yourself enough to remember that we are at a strange place."

"But I have found Leo!" replied the young lady, and fell again on the lad's neck. "Oh, my darling little Leo! I should hardly know you, but for these dear familiar eyes!"

Mr. Kyrie came down the steps with extended hand.

"I am very glad to see you, Captain Nickerson. Let one of the servants attend to the horses, please, and come in."

"Indeed, I had no idea of making such a commotion," replied Captain Mathew, laughing, although a trifle discomposed, remembering the accounts he had heard of Mr. Kyrie's haughty exclusiveness, "but it seems my young friend has found another friend."

"Her brother, her long lost brother!" interposed Miss Wise, in her clear, steady voice.

"What! Leo found his sister? Then I am as thoroughly rejoiced as he can be," said Mr. Kyrie, heartily.

And here a new commotion ensued, for Andrew, in the light open carriage with Miss Henderson, drove up behind them.

Whereupon there was a little joyful shriek from the balcony, blushing Maude's and Agnes Auckland's voices.

"Rose—Rose Henderson, you dear girl, where did you come from? Come here this moment."

Mr. Kyrie looked up to see Maude's face lighted up in eagerness, while Agnes was reaching over the balcony beckoning with unusual vehemence.

"If you please, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to see you dismounting," he said, with a touch of humour. "I can't remember the time visitors have been welcomed here with such enthusiasm. Captain Nickerson, pray make us acquainted with your lady and friends."

And then came a general introduction, out there on the stone steps. Bertha and Leo joined them with their joyful faces hardly yet cleared from agitation.

The latter led his sister to his friend's side, and said in a low but eager voice:

"Oh, Bertha, I want you to know him, my benefactor, my friend, who has been father and mother, brother and sister, all in one to me. This is Mr. Lormont."

The stately Bertha lifted her glowing eyes to his, but her voice would hardly command firmness enough to say:

"Dear sir; I can only give you my grateful blessing. And Heaven will surely reward such disinterested benevolence. But it must be some repayment to know what fervent joy it is for me to find my brother so good, so cultivated, so pure, as one can see at a glance you have kept him. Ah, I fear I



can never make you understand how I trembled lest a low and rough experience should change him into such a rude, uncouth object as I have seen so frequently in the streets. Misfortune had made my parents poor, but they were never ignorant, or coarse. We have noble blood in our veins, and poverty should not make us forget it. Leo, oh, my Leo, if you could know how I have trembled lest I should need to blush for you when I found you! We have indeed fallen into generous hands. Our dear parents must look down upon us in rejoicing love. But you must also know the friend who has stood toward me in the same generous attitude as your benefactor. You must come and see Miss Wise. This is indeed a joyful meeting. Captain Nickerson, I thank you a thousand times for bringing me with you."

Through all her agitation the girl kept her stately dignity of look and gesture. Leo followed her with proud and tender eyes, and so also, in spite of his efforts to hide it, did Andrew Courtney. Bertha seemed to hold a spell which drew him against all his power of resistance. She was the one woman who could have roused him out of his selfishness, who could have led him upward, at whose feet he could have knelt sincerely for commands, and been proud and glad to give obedience. It may be he had a dim perception of this, when in company with her and with Rose, he was continually drawing comparisons, fretfully complaining that he found the society of one so much more vivid, earnest, elevating for him than that of the other. He was sighing now that this fair young creature, with her stately aristocratic looks, should be really a portionless dependant upon the bounty of a woman who was herself only the possessor of a modest competency. He said that it was hard and cruel to him that the way of his interest should not be also the way of his heart, but he never once seriously considered the possibility of giving up his interest, although he took every opportunity to ingratiate himself into her favour, to offer those delicate, indescribable attentions which win a refined and cultivated maiden's regard.

He went up to her, and said, in his low harmoniously modulated voice:

"Dear Miss Bertha, I wish you could see how deeply I rejoice with you at this happy meeting."

Bertha smiled genially upon him. Was Andrew right in his belief that he had only to woo and win that proud and maidenly heart?

"Indeed, Mr. Courtney, I do not question your sincerity," she answered, earnestly.

And then, linking her arm in Leo's, followed the others, who, under Mr. Kyrie's lead, were moving on into the house.

Andrew could not afford just then to linger with them, much as he may have desired it. There was Captain Mathew to look after, and this Laurence Lermont. There must be no *l'été-à-l'été*, no falling off of the general conversation to allow opportunity for any little explanations. This was the duty with which he charged himself.

Aunt Elise, who had remained upon the balcony, and now stepped into the drawing-room as the company entered, received her presentation to the newcomers. When she and Miss Wise were introduced there came a quick change to either face, a sudden, subtle flash of expression, which, though it faded instantly, could not be lost upon such sharp eyes as Andrew's or Miss Ackland's. They passed the usual formal courtesies, and then Miss Wise turned to lay her hand kindly upon Leo's shoulder. It was a little unsteady, and her lips drew down into a stern line which seldom enough disturbed their smiling frankness, but otherwise she preserved her accustomed easy nonchalance.

Elise Liddell, on the contrary, turned so pale that Mr. Kyrie involuntarily stepped to her side. She took up a light portfolio from the table, to shade her face, forced a re-assuring smile, and sat down between Rose and Maude. He waited a moment, and then went back to his guests, giving however occasionally a keen, searching glance towards Miss Wise.

"This is, indeed, quite a providential meeting! Who had any idea it would result so wonderfully?" observed Mrs. Nickerson, all unconscious of the breadth of truth in her assertion.

"It is certainly that," replied Mr. Kyrie; "shall we retire to the library to look over the plans of our friend Lermont, captain?"

"Is that necessary, my dear sir?" interposed Andrew, in his suave voice, with one of his most gracious smiles. "I assure you our party are all exceedingly interested in the project. Why not have the plans here? I am sure the ladies can understand them, and I am eager enough to see them."

Which apparently unpremeditated suggestion procured the desired result, the plans were brought, and the gentlemen gathered around them. Andrew hovered between them and the ladies, his interest in the maps occurring spasmodically, according as Cap-

tain Mathew and the young surveyor approached each other in anything like confidential conversation. The old sea-captain, it must be confessed, took every opportunity for a furtive glance of enquiry into the frank, sunny face of the young gentleman, and was at once surprised and pleased, despite his indignation. It was not like the countenance of the man he both despised and hated. There was not a trace of his lineaments or expression, but instead something that unconsciously drew upon his sympathy and appealed for his good will. Besides, there was a frank unconsciousness in the manner of Laurence that ill agreed with his ideas of a man who cherishes a morbid resentment, and allows himself to be guilty of the deliberate rudeness of ignoring such an attempt at kindly reconciliation as the worthy old captain had made.

"I will put the question to him square and fair, if I have a chance. I will ask him why he did not answer my letter," resolved Captain Mathew.

If he had a chance! That was just what Andrew determined he should not have, and all unconsciously Mr. Kyrie played into the hands of the wily plotter by keeping or bringing back all desultory talk to the railroad question.

The ladies meanwhile, especially the younger ones, were chattering gaily, like so many magpies. Maude and Rose, with arms interlaced, stood in the bay window recalling with vivid minuteness all the pleasing little episodes of school-days. Agnes, while talking with Miss Wise and Bertha, occasionally threw over to them some sharp, pungent witticism, to start them upon a new theme, and kept her bright, wide-open eyes alert to notice any side movement; when presently Aunt Elise rose up, and, with some murmured remark about showing to her some new plant, beckoned for Miss Wise to follow her from the room. Miss Ackland in a fever of burning curiosity conjured her brain to devise an excuse for following them, and starting up declared she must go to her secretaire and hunt up a drawing she had found there the other day, a comical relic of their school attempts at caricature, which would, she was sure, delight Miss Henderson hugely.

She did not go to her chamber at once, but stole with cautious steps out from the rear door, across the balcony, there to the veranda, which opened on the western side of the house from the library. The windows there she knew were almost always half-way down. She had not reached her destination, however, when she shrank back at hearing a light footstep. The moment she recognised the intruder, she held up a warning finger, while her eye flashed angrily at the audacity which brought him there. It was no other than the light-haired stranger of the wood.

"How dare you?" said she, in a suppressed voice, not doubting but that some wish of communicating with her had brought him there.

In no whit discomposed, he answered, while he grasped her hand:

"Nonsense! I dare what I please. Tell me, are they in the library? Tell me why these people have come?"

"Miss Liddell and Miss Wise are in the library, I believe," she replied, in the same cautious voice.

"Miss Wise!" he repeated, impatiently. "Do you mean that lady with the black eyes and the fair complexion?"

"Yes, of course. Do you know her?"

He knit his brows, and then drew her towards the veranda.

"Come, let us see what mischief brought those two together."

However uneasy lest some one should come and discover her with such a questionable companion, Agnes could not resist the opportunity to gratify her curiosity. She slipped noiselessly into the veranda, and sat down behind the opportune screen of interlacing creepers. The stranger followed suit, and both turned attentive ears toward the window, whose only shade was the open venetian blind.

"No, it was not the plant I cared for," came distinctly to them in the low but clear voice of Aunt Elise. "After I recognised you, I could not be willing to let you go away without a private word. I am so thankful, so very thankful, to know that the wretched experience of that miserable time did not crush nor kill you. I confess when I have turned a pitying thought toward you, I have always felt that you received your death-blow then, and as not a single word of intelligence concerning your fate ever came to me, I unconsciously assumed that you were dead. I am very thankful to see that you have risen up against it, that you have conquered, that you are strong, and self-poised, and happy again."

"Thank you!" returned Miss Wise. And there was no need for the guilty eavesdroppers to strain their hearing now, for her strong, rich voice fell clearly and distinctly as the notes of a bell. "And I hope I may say the same for you. But you are

right. I have conquered it all. This meeting with you gives me my first exultant consciousness of it. I could not help being in a measure agitated, because it brought back to me the remembrance of all that humiliation and agony. But it was only a surface excitement, my heart did not give a single throb out of its even calm. Oh, I thank Heaven for it! The thought of him brings only scorn and contempt. Nay, if it were possible, I could look upon him now, this moment, without a single feeling of interest more than for that bronze figure yonder. Yes, I have conquered, and I am happy in my own life of healthful independence. The Lord make me grateful for his mercy!"

There was strong emotion in the grateful tone. Then for a moment there was silence. It was Miss Wise's voice again which broke it.

"But you, dear lady? I saw the pallor of your face, the tremor of your hands. Though you were spared the shame that came to me, it seems you could not escape the misery, and I fear it has pursued you."

"Yes, it has pursued me; my cross has borne heavily, and it wears more deeply day by day," sighed the plaintive tones, in answer.

"I am sorry—I wish I could speak a word of comfort," spoke Miss Wise, earnestly. "I have thought of you so much, so frequently, when I have trusted myself to look back on that black page of my history. I have even pictured our meeting again, and what I should say to thank you for the tender and pitiful kindness with which you spoke to me when I was reeling helplessly beneath that terrible blow. But I did not dream the meeting would be this side the dark river. Least of all did I suspect you were living here so near to me. I did not hear your name, you remember; and I did not pause to learn anything about you. I rushed away, in frantic haste, like any other desperately wounded creature, and I tore myself away from everything that could remind me of my wrecked life, my blasted hopes. Earnest, unrelenting work was my salvation. Heaven smiled compassionately upon me. I have conquered. I have prospered. I even dare to say that I am a better, stronger, worthier human being, whether or no I am a truer woman, than I should have been had no such blight fallen upon me."

Agnes Ackland saw her companion's hand take a desperate, angry hold upon the railing. Glancing around to his face, she beheld those black eyes flashing in a singular blending of anger and gloom.

"And you have no fear—I am sure there can be no wish—of meeting him?" asked Aunt Elise, half enviously.

"No more than if the bronze figure yonder confronted me, unless he should dare to speak; then I could sweep him out of my path with the same loathing scorn that any other deadly reptile might awaken."

"Thank Heaven, he has no power over you!" murmured Aunt Elise. "I was afraid; I thought—"

"Death snapp'd the link," and this time the speaker's voice was thick and low. "The Lord's ways are merciful. It seemed bitter hard then to lose it. I try to believe now that it was best."

"Then it will be needless for me to warn you that he is still living, and haunting this vicinity. I say again I am thankful he has no power over you. I hope I shall see more of you. It will be inexpressible comfort to lean upon your strength, I, who am so weak and weary with my constant wrestling. Perhaps we had better return now. Our absence may be remarked."

There was some reply, which was lost in the rustle of silken garments, and a movement inside.

Agnes sprang up lightly, slipped out of the detaining hands, and hurried into the house. She was at the drawing-room door, the pencil sketch in her hand, when the two ladies, lingering over the last words, joined the company.

"I thought it would never come to light, but I found it at last. Look, Rose, there is the old dominion and that dressing-gown—you can't have forgotten it," she cried merrily.

"You can't imagine what delightful project has been proposed during your absence, Aunt Elise and Agnes," said Maude. "These good people could not be persuaded to remain with us for dinner, and we have determined to follow Mahomet's example, and go to the mountain that won't come to us. They are to picnic in that lovely grove on the main road, and papa has consented that we shall ride back with them, and take part in it."

Agnes was more than delighted.

"Now I shall have a little longer time to read these riddles that are coming from all quarters," thought she.

"Will you give orders that some of the servants make the addition to the lunch necessitated by such an influx of unexpected guests, Elise?" said Mr. Kyrie.

Aunt Elise proceeded promptly to the house-keeper's room with the necessary commands. The sharp ears still hiding behind the leafy screen of the seldom-used rear veranda heard the new programme also.

The evil black eyes sparkled triumphantly.

"There shall be another guest beside," he muttered. "Ch! oh! so I can move my lady no further than a bronze statue? We shall see." This bit of yellow paper may tell another story.

He took from a faded morocco pocket-book a time-worn letter, looked at it a moment exultantly, and repeated:

"We will see—we will see! The bronze statue cannot speak, but I may. Where could I find a better opportunity than at this picnic?"

He stepped forth cautiously while thus soliloquising, crept along beneath the shade of the balcony, and nearly gained the garden, when he almost fell against Laurence Lermont, who was coming from the French window of the breakfast-parlour to order the horses for their party.

He recovered his balance, muttering an angry oath. Laurence drew himself up haughtily, and cast a sharp glance into the face before him. A deep crimson rushed into his own, and when it faded he was pale with some strong and sharp emotion.

"You—here!" exclaimed he.

The other had drawn a long breath of relief.

"So it is only you, after all. Well, yes, I am here. You do not greet me very cordially, young man."

It hardly seemed possible that cold, stern face could be the frank, sunny, genial countenance that Leo loved so devotedly, that Mr. Kyrle admired so heartily.

"I suppose not," replied Laurence, bitterly. "I am no hypocrite, sir. Do you wish to see me? You will not obtain any money if you seek it in this unwarrantable manner. Why did you not write? I have not heard from you for two years at the least."

"You hoped to hear no more," returned the other, tauntingly. "I regret exceedingly that I disappointed you by living. Just now I don't happen to be in need of funds. I shall call on you before long, I daresay. And it is business of my own brought me here. I might return the compliment, and ask what queer freak of fate brought you into this vicinity, but I haven't time. *Au revoir*, young gentleman!"

And before Laurence could question farther he darted away.

The young man proceeded upon his errand, but his face was grave, and his thoughts disquieted by an uneasy foreboding.

"Woe is me, that I must say it!" he muttered, "but to see him is to be sure that mischief and trouble are at hand."

(To be continued.)

## SCIENCE.

**MORTAR.**—The disadvantages arising from those kinds of mortar at present in use are chiefly owing to inferior sand being used, and the great difficulty of obtaining sand at a moderate price. A material has been invented which does away with these difficulties, for when used it requires only to be mixed with water. In order to make one tun of this mortar, the following substances should be ground by machinery: 285 lbs. of lime (either caustic or the hydrate), 1728 lbs. of slag, and 224 lbs. of calcined coal-shale clay. These materials having been ground to the degree of fineness required, are mixed, and are ready for use. From the nature of the substances used, there would be, doubtless, a more rapid chemical action than that which takes place in ordinary mortar. For plastering purposes the compost seems to be eminently suitable.

**THE GROWTH OF TREE TRUNKS.**—A French naturalist has been measuring the tree-trunks in a forest, and found them all broader in the east-west than in the north-south direction; the cause of the asymmetry, being ascribed, not very obviously, to the rotation of the earth. Well, another French arborist has been similarly gaging the trees in the neighbourhood of Toulouse, and he finds that the greatest swelling of their trunks is towards the east-south-east point of the compass. The explanation offered by this second investigator is more philosophical than that of his predecessor. He refers the deformation to the early morning sun, which warms the easterly parts of the tree more suddenly than the rest, stimulates the flow of the sap, which grows sluggish during the cool of the night, and draws up the nourishing moisture from the soil in greater abundance on the excited side than on those portions of the trunk where the warming is more gradual and its effects less active. Naturally, increased vitality on one side, be it animal or plant, results in developments, or larger

growth on that side. There are traditions of some plants turning their flowers to the sun; the truth may be that the sun only promotes the growth of those blossoms upon which it sheds its direct warmth. As Dulong said, every degree of the thermometer entails a law of nature.

## POWER AND PRESSURE OF THE STEAM-ENGINE.

As regards the mechanism of the working steam-engine, we are on the eve of great changes. During the past few years new ideas have sprung up in regard to the pressure at which steam can be safely worked, and the speed at which a piston may be driven. The old notion of 220 feet per minute is now being abandoned, and engines are already working at a velocity of 800 feet. By this means the power of a given size of engine-mechanism is increased nearly fourfold, that is to say, a given pressure on the piston travelling nearly four times as fast as it used to do, like the teldynamic cord, will transmit mechanical work in proportion, of course requiring an increased volume of steam. But such increased velocity demands sounder and more refined workmanship, larger bearing surfaces, and every moving part as light as possible; and the mechanical world has to be gradually educated to a higher level, in order to make good the position already achieved.

Another modern feature is the various attempts that are being made to economise steam when it reaches the engine. In past times, as a general rule, this most important point has not received sufficiently close attention; too much steam is lost in the passages; valves do not open and shut with the absolute precision which is necessary to produce the greatest effect; due advantage has not been taken of the expansive property of steam after it has entered the cylinder. The office of the governor has been confined to cutting off the supply when the engine went too fast, or to admit more steam when it went too slow.

All this is being altered in the foremost class of engines; the steam passages are being shortened; several arrangements of value are being introduced whereby the steam is admitted at the precise moment, then closed again as promptly, and the time of closing, together with the degree of expansion to be given to the steam as depending on the work to be done for the moment, are determined by the governor at every stroke of the piston. The escape of the steam after doing its work is also being put upon a better footing; it is now arranged so that, at the precise moment of time, the way of exit is full open, and remains full open during the whole stroke, and then instantly closes.

Another fertile source for future economy lies in the direction of increased steam-pressure, and along with that an increased expansion in the cylinder of the engine. During the past hundred years it has gradually risen from a pressure about equal to the atmosphere or a little over, to that of 150 lbs. on the square inch, and no barrier has yet presented itself which would indicate a limit beyond the strength and goodness of the materials and the size of the apparatus; and so far as can be seen at present, 500 lbs. per inch does not seem beyond the bounds of possibility. This, however, is a matter "which time will develop and bring to maturity, like the acorn in reference to the oak." Our present duty is to creep warily in dealing with such enormous pressures, when bottled up in boilers as at present constructed.

**AN INVENTION WANTED.**—An instrument is very much needed to test the purity of the atmosphere, and the person who will invent and introduce such an article, which shall be simple and cheap, will not only enrich himself, but confer a great boon upon poorly-ventilated humanity. We have the thermometer to tell us the temperature of the air, and we have the barometer to tell us the moisture of the air, but we have no means of cheaply and easily measuring the purity of the air. Such an apparatus is needed in every church, lecture-room, and place of public gathering, and in every room occupied by human beings, either in public or in private. If people could see the amount of poison they were taking into their systems at every breath, they would be more careful to secure pure air to breathe. Such an invention is greatly needed, and the want will soon be supplied. Who will be the one to confer this blessing on the race?

**POLISHING GRANITE.**—Granite, after having been worked into form with heavy dumpy picks, and then with the hammer and chisel or diamond-point, is first ground to a moderately smooth surface with a heavy iron plate fed with sharp sand or coarse emery and water, and put into reciprocal motion, or in turned works the granite is put in quick circular revolution against the rubber. Secondly, the work is smoothed with another iron plate and coarse flour emery. Thirdly, it is further advanced by wooden rubbers with fine flour emery, the rubbers being made the end way of the wood. Fourthly and lastly, crocus is used on thick felt laid on wood or metal. On account of the softness of the mica,

compared with the quartz and felspar, which together constitute the granite, the hard rubbers must be persevered in until near the conclusion, to keep the work flat, otherwise the mica is too quickly worn away, and leaves minute hollows. Sometimes lumps of granite are used as rubbers instead of the iron plates. Granite, when worked by the lapidary, is slit and roughly ground in the common mode adopted both with carnelian and alabaster, namely, the slicer with diamond powder and the roughing or lead mill with coarse emery; afterwards it is found best to smooth it on a mahogany wheel with flour emery, and to polish it on the lead wheel with rottenstone; but it requires great care to prevent the soft mica from being unduly worn away.

In the town of Petworth, in Sussex, there lately died an old man, whose wife, long since dead, had held a post of trust in the household of the late Earl of Egremont. During her long years of service her fidelity had been from time to time rewarded with presents, such as ornaments, furniture, &c. These, of course, were important items of the old couple's possessions. It was known that some of these articles were of real value, and it so happened, when the old man died, his property, following the example of many greater people, was brought to the hammer. Among other things was a small oil sketch representing a *fête champêtre*, or some similar subject, perhaps a copy from Watteau, but about the merits of which none of the village *connoisseurs* were competent to form an opinion. While the sale was proceeding, matters were considerably enlivened by the arrival of nine stranger gentlemen from London, who burst in among the astonished rustics as if they had fallen from the clouds. The mystic nine took no share in the proceedings until the little canvas was exposed for sale, when they immediately commenced an animated competition, in which a certain amount of unity of plan was plainly discernible. At last one of them secured the prize for 32l., none of the other competitors appearing at all amazed at the failure of their bids or the shortness of their purses. The successful competitor having secured the prize, marched off, accompanied by his friends, to the village inn, where an excellent dinner, in mine host's best style, awaited them. This disposed of the little canvas was once more put up to private auction, real business was done, and the genuine sketch by Watteau, as it proved to be, was knocked down to one of the party, after a keen competition, for no less a sum than 142l., probably more than the whole value of the cottage furniture of which it had formed for years so deplorable a part. It is only curious that no offer should have been made during the lifetime of its owners, who would probably have been satisfied with a sum considerably less than that to which it was raised by professional competition.

**A MYSTERY.**—One of the Paris journals announces the death, at Versailles, of a Russian lady who appeared in the drawing-rooms of Paris in 1848 and 1849, and was nicknamed the "Dame à la Clef." She died, aged forty-five, in the most complete solitude. It is said that her husband, who was much older than she, came to see her for a week or two every six months, and went away again no one knew whither. All was mysterious about this lady of the Key. Last month the husband did not return as usual, but a letter came announcing his death. The widow survived him a few days only, and it is supposed she allowed herself to die of hunger. Whether true or not, this was the story that was whispered about her when she appeared in Paris, young and beautiful, more than twenty years ago. It is said that her husband surprised her in a little country house which he possessed near Moscow, at the moment she was hastily shutting somebody up in a wardrobe. A servant had betrayed her. The Muscovite Othello turned the key twice in the wardrobe, took it out, then told his wife to follow him. A travelling britzka stood a few paces from the villa. When the husband had placed her in the carriage, and given an order in a low voice to the coachman, "Keep this key," he said to his wife; "I have forgotten something and will return," and then went back to the house. He returned according to his promise, but as the carriage descended the hill the poor woman saw the flames issuing from the windows of the country house and taking full possession of it. She fainted away, and on regaining her senses perceived that a gold chain was riveted round her neck to which the little key of the wardrobe was attached. She wished to kill herself, but her husband threatened her that if she committed suicide he would reveal her misconduct and cover her and her family with dishonour. She was, therefore, condemned to live, and her strange necklace excited much curiosity in Paris. At last her tyrant allowed her to retire into a quiet retreat on the express stipulation that she would not attempt to destroy herself during his lifetime. His death released her from this condition.





[A RUFFIAN'S DEFEAT.]

## FAITHFUL MARGARET.

### CHAPTER XXI.

Against the head which innocence secures,  
Invidious malice aims her darts in vain;  
Turned backward by the powerful breath of heaven.  
*Dr. Johnson.*

ONE by one Margaret's faculties deserted her; her power of speech first of all, then her power of motion, her power of resistance, even her capacity of fear. All save the sense of sight left poor Margaret, and she watched with distended eyeballs and a dull, ghastly feeling of interest the movements of the man who was to murder her.

What had he done to her that had thrown her into this helpless lethargy?

A faint, sweet odour pervaded the carriage. It was the insidious chloroform stealing her consciousness from her, and deadening every nerve. She saw him take a tiny phial from his pocket, fit a perforated top upon it, and direct a spirit of deadly perfume, fine as a hair, into her face.

She tried to move but could not. The breath was cut off from her nostrils by that fatal jet; she could only gaze with a sad, anguished look into those flaming eyes opposite her.

Something in the harrowing intensity of that silent look troubled the man.

He missed his aim, and the death-giving essence streamed harmlessly upon the bosom of her dress.

Again and again he adjusted the cunning little tube so as to force her to breathe its fatal contents; but his hand trembled, his face waxed white—he quailed before the ghostly appeal of those fixed orbs. Minutes passed.

Why did not the man finish his victim?  
Was ever yet a woman more completely in a murderer's power?

Her attendant dragged into a senseless clod beside her, her faculties all benumbed, no eye to watch the tragedy, no hand to seize the villain—why did he not act out his instructions?

She held him by that mesmeric gaze, where the soul stood plainly forth pleading for mercy. She was so young, so gentle, so sorrowful!

Ah! he cowered at length from his fell purpose; he dallied with his chance, and that chance slipped by.

The train glided into a station shed; the lights glowed in at the window paling the flickering oil-lamp hanging from the roof. Strangers rushed pell-mell across the platform; and at last the door of this carriage was opened and a young man looked in.

Margaret vehemently sought to cry out to him, to

stretch out her hands, to moan even, but in vain! She seemed petrified.

The young man's eyes passed aimlessly over the white-faced woman in black and her sleeping escort, and fastened doubtfully upon the disconcerted ruffian.

"Is Richard Grainger in this carriage?" shouted he. "I am the chap you want," returned the man in the fur coat.

The other handed him a telegram and vanished instantly, and the carriage moved on.

She saw him hold up a slip of paper to the dim flame and read its contents, and the sickly pallor crept out of his cheeks and the coarse red came back. He looked hard in her face with a sinister light on his visage, and smiled at her with a certain kind of grim admiration.

He broke out into a volley of fearful maledictions upon her, himself, and the "beast" who had given him the job—tearing up the telegram into small pieces and tossing them insolently into Margaret's lap.

It was evident that he considered her blind and deaf, as well as paralyzed, else he never would have exposed his principal as he did in these violent imprecations.

So the train glided on upon its midnight journey, and the man turned his back upon his intended victim. But she was adoring God in her heart of hearts for her dear life's preservation.

Her cold stoicism melted, the bitter fortitude with which she had looked for death fled. How could she have cast that reproachful thought at Heaven and believed herself forsaken?

Her heart swelled with gratitude and remorse, now that she saw her mistake; and although she could not move an eyelash, her emotion surged higher and higher, until it burst through the barriers of the spell which bound her, and great tears gushed from her eyes.

At the first station they came to the man rose to leave the carriage. He glanced sharply at Margaret's tearful face and jerked down the window that she might have some air, then, with an oath, stumbled over Purcell's feet and got out.

Then the long night crept by, and gradually the lady and her servant recovered, and spoke to each other.

"Purcell, do you know me?"  
She was chafing the old man's temples, and applying her smelling-salts to his nose.

"Eh? ha? My conscience! is that you, miss?" mumbled the steward, with a thick tongue and a vacant look at her.

"Are you better?"

"Humph—not much. Tush! What's in my mouth? Fever?"

"No, no, Purcell. You've been asleep—that's all." "I've been dead, I think. Dead for years and years. I think I was in another world. Dear, bless me! My legs are heavy as lead. I say, Miss Margaret, what took me—a fit?" whispered the steward, in a fright.

"No. You were put to sleep with chloroform by that man who sat opposite. He stupefied you with poisoned snuff, and then used chloroform. You need not feel alarm, though—you have recovered."

"Faith, miss—you look but poorly yourself," said Purcell, struck by her extreme pallor. "Was—was he a thief, miss—and did he rob us?"

"He was a murderer, Purcell, and intended to kill me," said Margaret, with tears in her eyes. "But God would not permit him to succeed."

She related the circumstances to the old man, who rose from terror into fury when he realised how completely he had been taken in through his favourite refreshment, snuff, and laid out senseless beside his helpless young mistress.

She soothed his wounded feelings, and directed him to use caution during the rest of his fateful journey.

At daybreak they came to Cirencester, and rested there for some hours, and at nine o'clock took coach for Llandaff.

They had not travelled a dozen miles, when a horseman galloped past the great lumbering coach, flashing a keen glance in at Margaret Walsingham, and then disappeared upon the winding road ahead.

She gasped, and grew white.

He wore a horseman's cloak and a slouching hat. But she was not deceived in the brutal gleam of those steel-blue eyes. He was the ruffian who was hired to kill her.

Almost fainting, she communicated her fears to her servant, who grew very purple, and swore to be even with the varlet before long, and stopped the coach to tell the driver that the chap who had just passed was a villain, who ought to be arrested for attempted murder in a railway carriage; and the driver grew hot and excited, and leagued with three gentlemen on the outside to knock the fellow down and secure him the first minute they set eyes on him.

So Margaret and her attendant continued their journey with some sense of security; and, having the inside of the coach to themselves, could encourage each other to meet future dangers, when anything cheerful occurred to them to say.

But all through that forenoon they travelled safely, unmolested by even a glimpse of Mortlake's accomplice; and at noon they rattled into Llandaff, and stepped before Caerlyon's hotel.

A groom was leading a smoking black horse round to the stables. Margaret whispered to Purcell, and pointed the animal out to him.

"His horse," she said. "Now, Purcell, see that you have him arrested. Fly! There's no time to be lost. You must get a constable with you, I suppose."

Purcell disappeared in the bar to make inquiries, and Margaret at once took refuge in her room, and sent for the proprietor himself.

The Welsh landlord bustled in, full of politeness and good humour.

"Has Dr. Gay, from Regis, Surrey, been here, yesterday or to-day?" demanded the lady.

"No, matam, he has not."

"Is there no letter lying here for Miss Walsingham, of Regis, Surrey?"

"No, intest, matam—nothing of the sort."

She turned suddenly, with a groan, from him, and her dark face grew darker.

"Tricked!—drawn into a trap! I, might have known it—oh, I might have known it!" she murmured, bitterly.

"Anything I can do for you, my dear lady?" asked Mr. Caerlyon, attentively.

"Yes, you can send a servant to keep watch at my door until my man returns. And there is a person whom I want arrested upon the charge of attempted murder, the man whose horse your ostler was attending to when the coach arrived. Where is he?"

"My Got! a murderer!" screamed the landlord. "You don't say that, matam? Oh, the peast! He must be caught, of course. Put he took very cool care not to come to me, dear lady. He went somewhere into the town, and sent his nak here to wait. I'll keep a cool look-out for him, I promise you, the sneaking scoundrel!"

Muttering vituperations, he backed out of the room, and sent a woman to attend the lady, and a great shambling pot-boy to guard her door.

"Now, what am I to think?" mused Margaret, who had thrown herself upon a sofa, and was feverishly watching the Welshman setting the table for her dinner. "How am I to follow out the intricacies of that wretch's plot? It is clear that he has amply provided against my escaping from him. True enough, he is too clever to leave any door open for his victim. I foolishly thought that I had taken him by surprise when I escaped the castle and throw myself on Emersham's protection; but he meets me on the flight, and turns my purpose into another channel. I leave him foiled at the castle; I fly to the executors; he has foreseen the move, and meets me with the news of their disappearance. I turn to Mr. Emersham for help. He has foreseen that also, and meets me with a forged letter, which turns my wishes all toward taking this journey. For a moment he is taken aback when he receives my letter, showing him the precautions I have taken to expose him, and allows me to go on the journey which he has already provided for, only because he has not time to prevent me. But he telegraphs to his accomplice that I must not be murdered yet, and his accomplice spares me. Instead of finishing his work, he goes out at the next station, and probably telegraphs something to his principal, and waits for a new order. That he received it, is evident from his continuing his pursuit, and haunting my steps as he has done. Now, why was I not murdered, according to their agreement? For what was I reserved? And what was that fresh command which the accomplice received per telegraph from Mortlake?"

Mr. Caerlyon tapped at her door, and called out that there was a letter for her, and the waiting woman brought it to Margaret, who received it eagerly, hoping that it was from Dr. Gay, after all.

But she perceived in a moment that it was not, and saw, with disgust, the large, sprawling characters on the back of the note, and the dirty wafer which closed it in lieu of an envelope.

With shrinking fingers she opened it, and read these words:

"MA'AM—You knows doosed well who's a-talkin' to yer by this here. If you be's the woman I takes yer for, yer won't be sulky, and throw away yer only chance, for mean spite. Come now, jest give me yer note of hand that yer'll return that 'ere stole pocket-book to its owner whenever you sees Regis agin, and yer'll see no more of yer admirin' friend; but act ugly, and—ware-hawk! yer'll be awhile on the road back—that's all."

"Yours to command,

"POCKET PISTOL."

"No, you wretch," said Margaret, "I shall not give up the pocket-book which condemns Mortlake. I simply defy your threats, and shall be well guarded in future. My doubts are answered. I know what

Mortlake's new order was; there it is," she cried, tossing the villainous-looking scrawl upon the table, "and I defy it! He offers me my life in exchange for my proofs, and I scorn his offer. I would rather bring such a fiend to justice than live a happy life, knowing that I had suffered him to elude his just punishment."

She called Mr. Caerlyon in.

"Who brought that letter?" asked she.

"A ferry rackett poy, matam," returned he.

"Is he waiting for an answer?"

"Yes, intest, matam, ant playing with a crown piece, he says the gentleman have him to holt his tongue."

"Tell him that there is no answer, and send for a constable to follow the boy and to seize the man who sent him."

"I'll see to that, my lady," cried the landlord, with spirit, and disappeared with great alacrity.

In half an hour Mr. Caerlyon and Mr. Purcell came to announce to her that both their pursuits had been fruitless; the villain had disappeared as completely as the mirage which is lifted in air, and Purcell's warrant and police assistance came too late.

The fire flashed from the indomitable woman's eyes, and she raised her head resolutely.

"We shall prepare for him, then," said she, with calm courage, "and meet him suitably when he intrudes upon us. In an hour we shall start on our journey back to Regis, Purcell, so you must go and refresh yourself. Mr. Caerlyon, you shall do me the favour of calling upon the Chief of the Police and handing him a note from me."

The steward retired to obey her command, and Caerlyon cheerfully promised to do anything for such a brave lady, and waited for her to write her letter.

It was a letter of instructions; she wished the Chief of Police to send two of his sharpest detectives on the road to Cirencester a half hour before she and her servant started, that they might thereafter travel in company without rousing the suspicion of Grainger by leaving Llandaff together. She explained the case, and suggested the need of the detectives disguising themselves that they might protect her throughout the journey, without frightening away the ruffian, who would doubtless attempt her life once more before she reached Regis. As soon as she had finished, Caerlyon carried off the letter with all due secrecy.

In an hour the return coach from Cirencester dashed up to the hotel, and Margaret and her escort took their places inside, alone. There were some men, as before, on the top, but Grainger discreetly kept out of sight, and since his black horse still manched his oats in Caerlyon's stable, everybody thought that the travellers were leaving their enemy behind them.

At the first inn two farmers stopped the coach, and climbed in beside Margaret; a respectful bow to her and Purcell revealed them as her protectors, the detectives.

The liveliest imagination could never have discovered in these heavy-faced, slow spoken, and comfortably muffled farmers two lynx-eyed emissaries of the law, on the track of a felon; their disguise was admirable.

When more passengers crowded in, the two farmers grunted out agricultural jokes to each other, or read the county paper, or appraised the intrinsic value of each snow-capped barn, and white-ridged field, and huge wheat-stack they passed with a zest and eagerness positively infectious, until every man inside was drawn into the argument, and a few shrewd questions had been asked and innocently answered, which disclosed the fact that a man in a fur coat had galloped up the road three-quarters of an hour ago upon a gray horse.

"Thought Calder's horse was missing when I went to his stables," muttered one detective to the other; "he has got off before we left the town. All right, we'll catch him up."

But they did not catch him, up that night; and although the two officers slept in a room across the passage from Miss Walsingham's, in the hotel at Cirencester, they saw no one attempt either to communicate with her or to molest her.

So it remained all during the next day's cold and weary journey, the masked detectives carefully kept close by the threatened young lady, and furtively watched each passenger who entered or left the carriage; but the ruffian was not to be traced, his menace to Margaret was but an empty vaunt; her precautions seemed to have effectually routed him.

At seven o'clock that Thursday evening, the train glided into the Registation, the red lights glimmered on the platform, the crowd jostled, surged, and receded; and when the way seemed clear, one of the detectives got out to fetch a cab for Margaret before she should leave the carriage.

While he was gone a close carriage rolled into the station, and the driver, touching his hat to Margaret, whom he could see at the carriage window, offered his services and his cab.

"This will do," said she to Purcell. "When Adams brings the other cab, our friends will need it to go to their hotel. Time is passing, and I must keep my engagement with Mr. Emersham."

The remaining detective got out and stood a yard or so in advance of the cab-driver, who was opening his cab-door; and Purcell assisted his mistress out of the carriage to the platform, and then turned round and stooped to pick up her travelling-bag where he had thrown it.

In a moment the long-expected crisis came, so long delayed, so startling now when they thought it was too late to fear it longer.

A man darted out of the shadow of the station-house, and sprang like a panther on his victim. He threw the stooping Purcell violently upon the ground; seized Margaret, and hurried her with a giant's strength to the door of the cab, into which he tried to force her.

"Get in with you, or I'll blow your brains out!" hissed his desperate voice in her ear.

Her shriek of terror had scarcely escaped when the detective, coolly stepping forward from his watch, dealt the ruffian a blow on the back of the head with his horny fist, which felled him like an ox, and the levelled pistol fell from his relaxing hand and snapped off with the concussion, starting the cabman's horse so violently that it plunged off, with the cabman clinging to the reins.

A railway porter ran up to the scene of the assault and held the half-maimed Grainger while the detective secured him, and Purcell having gathered himself up with aching bones, led the agitated Margaret into the station.

By this time a crowd had assembled, and were crushing each other unceremoniously to gain a glimpse of the prisoner, who lay cursing and blaspheming on the floor, with his conqueror grimly standing over him, until Adams rattled up in the cab he had been in search of, and shared the onerous duty of gaoler.

Margaret, glancing shudderingly out of the station-window, saw the wretched man pass on his way to the police-station, his captors on either side urging him to hasten. His hands were tied behind him, his florid face was yellow with despair, his steel-blue eyes glared with fear; a more abject picture of crime and ruin could scarce be conceived.

And when this wretched vision had vanished, another took its place. A writhing white face flitted spectre-like from out of dim shadows, and peered with staring eyeballs after the arrested man; and a scowl of fury, terror, and despair descended on that evil brow.

The next instant he too had melted into shadow, and was lost amid the throng.

"Roland Mortlake," whispered Margaret, who was shivering as if she had seen a phantom; "he has learned the truth. Great heavens! He will escape!"

She stepped to the door, and called the steward, who had gone to open the cab door.

"Go instantly in search of Mortlake!" she cried; "he has just passed the window: you must not permit him to escape! I will drive to Emersham's office myself."

Away ran Purcell after two constables; and Margaret hurried into the cab, and, undeterred by one heart-beat of compunction, she set herself to compass her enemy's utter ruin.

For pitiful, kind, and great-hearted as she was, she could never suffer a murderer to escape; no, not even to buy her own safety.

Margaret Walsingham alighted from the carriage at the door of Mr. Emersham's office, and stepped into the room with the mien of a Semiramis, flashing-eyed, carmine-cheeked, and inexorable.

One glance around the room showed her the nimble young lawyer, and the trembling old clergyman, gazing white-lipped into each other's faces, the folded paper on the table between them, the locked pocket-book, and the will; and the hand of the clock on the mantel-piece pointing to the fifteenth minute after seven.

"Thank God! she is here!" murmured Mr. Chal-loner, solemnly.

"I have come back," said Margaret, "to break these seals and to expose a felon. Hasten, or the felon will escape."

## CHAPTER XXII.

See what a settled gloom obscures his visage! Sure emblem of the horror of his breast. Where his false heart, enthroned in native darkness, Broods o'er new treasons. Howard.

Mrs. CHURCHWOOD, sitting in her room at Castle Brand at half-past seven of the night, heard a dreadful racket of horse's hoofs on the frozen court below,



and looking down from her window, she saw the colonel throwing himself from the saddle, and striding up the front steps in red-hot haste.

A thundering knock at the door announced the humour of the gentleman, and the meek old lady hurried into the hall to see him when he entered, murmuring to herself with mild astonishment:

"What's sent the man back in such a temper, I wonder? My! he's always rampaging about one thing or another; no wonder my poor miss hates him."

The man who opened the door to the colonel recoiled in astonishment from his fell scowl, as he brushed past him and sprang up the stairs, three at a time.

In the absence of the mistress of Castle Brand, the unwelcome guest had appropriated to himself a suite of apartments in the castle, announcing his intention of waiting there for the return of the fugitive, and had lived a short but merry season in luxury and splendour; what wonder that he loathed the remorseless fates which were conspiring to thrust him out of his paradise into outer darkness!

The maid who was replenishing the colonel's fire against his return from his ride, heard a savage oath behind her, and favoured by the darkness, slipped behind the door in a fright, and stared with all her eyes at the colonel lighting his lamp, and banging down his desk upon the table.

He cursed everything he touched with the most blasphemous imprecations all the time he was removing papers and letters to his private pocket-book—all the time he was cramming his purse with gold and bank-notes—all the time he was tossing his rich wardrobe into a valise.

Then he strode to the door, and turning on the threshold sent a terrible scowl over the magnificent chamber, glittering with the flash of rich ornaments and the sheen of satin curtains. The veins swelled out on his forehead, and his pale lips twitched convulsively.

"All lost—all lost!" groaned the man, in a despairing voice, and closed the door with a bang that shook the walls, and echoed through the vast halls like the report of a cannon.

Then he went into the drawing-room, where the housekeeper had taken refuge when she saw him coming along the passage, and with a diabolical sneer on his livid face. He went to the marble-topped tables, mantel slabs, chiffonniers, and tiny whatnots, all laden with articles of *bijouterie*, and swept off the most costly of the ornaments into his capacious valise, packing in paperweights of solid amethyst, vases of cut corallian, ruby-spar, and frosted silver, pitching above them priceless gems of art in miniature, statuettes cut from topaz and from chrysolites (each of which had cost a little fortune), and then locking up his valise, making off with it, "for all the world as if he was a thief," as Mrs. Chetwode gasped out to the cook, when she could seek the safety of the kitchen for fright.

Then this eccentric colonel strode downstairs and took his ample Spanish riding cloak off the peg, and wrapping himself in it, with the startled John's help, he stepped to the dining-room door and threw a lowering glance around the majestic chamber. There was a fine portrait of St. Udo Brand in his best days, painted upon the panel over the fire-place, and the rudely light of the great astral lamp shone richly over the bold eyes and frank brow of the true heir at Castle Brand.

That skulking, demoniac face in the doorway glared with frantic fury at the proud high countenance on the wall, and a malediction burst from the writhing lips in a hissing whisper.

"Foul! you desecrated your fate," came the furious words—"you had everything and I had nothing—I, the elder, the first-born. Yet you threw your luck away with pride, and beguiled me on to my ruin! Even in your grave you put out your hand to give me the fatal push."

He turned on his heel after that, and fled from the castle as if the avenger of blood were at his back, and ordering out the best blood horse in the stables, he mounted and galloped down the drive.

Between the castle and the lodge he looked behind, and spied his hound Argus tearing from the kennel after him.

The old lodge-keeper, who had hobbled out to open the gate, seeing that the colonel was in such a hurry, was amazed to hear his hoarse tones raised like a madman's, while he ordered the dog home again, and threatened him in shocking language. The dog crouched among the withered leaves until his master was riding on again, and then he slunk after him as before.

For the second time the colonel looked round at him, and catching him creeping after, he threw him self from the saddle, and seizing the hound by the collar, beat him with his weighted whip until the poor animal yelled with pain, and then he rode on again.

Still the dog dragged its bleeding limbs after its brutal master and sought to keep him company, for he was his only friend, and had he not followed him many a weary mile?

For the third time the colonel looked behind, and caught the faithful brute following him. He drew a pistol from his breast and levelled it full at the cowering hound, which nevertheless crawled close up to him, and whined, and licked his master's foot; he shot him, and rode on.

So his last friend fell dead by his merciless hand, his faithful serving had not availed to save him, his obedience had not helped him; when he was no longer of use to Roland Mortlake, and might be in his way, he crushed the creature that had loved him, and fled without him.

At the lodge-gate he turned for the last time in his saddle, and looked at the grand old castle standing in the midst of its rich domain, and looming like a Druid rock out of the chill moonlight.

A gleam of wicked envy broke from his basilisk eyes; he shook his clenched hand frantically at the stately pile, and the howl of a hungry tiger burst hoarsely from his throat.

"It's mine by rights!" he cried in a frenzy, "and yet I've lost it for ever! I might have been made for life, and now there's nothing left me but the gallows."

He finished with a vehement volley of oaths, his wolfish face grew black with passion, his tall frame bowed upon his horse's mane in an access of abject fear, and plunging his spurs in his startled steed's flanks, he bounded away like the wind; but not on the road to Regis.

(To be continued.)

## ROUND THE WORLD.

### CHAPTER XLVI.

THIS news was most depressing. Roland felt an anguish that was uncontrollable and indescribable. He had woven so many hopes and dreams with the noble general and his lovely wife, had desired so ardently to retain their friendship, and had regarded them with a love akin to worship. And this was the end of all his dreams.

He walked to the window, and looked into the garden with eyes that saw nothing. His soul was convulsed with a terrible grief.

Lily was thus left to tell their story, which she did most effectively. She described their adventures, their escape from the mutineers, &c., in so graphic a manner that her hostess sighed, and smiled, and wept alternately, and wondered continually at her courage and cheerfulness.

The day passed pleasantly at the consul's residence, Roland forcing cheerfulness he could not feel. The young couple strolled in the garden, and to the beach, where they had been taken prisoner by Stocks. In the afternoon they walked through the town, making needful purchases, and about midnight they returned to the ship, well pleased with the generous hospitalities they had received.

"I've got news for you," said Captain Wexley, as they entered the cabin. "The Dolphin left port a week ago. She's been here several weeks."

"It's true," said the captain, chuckling. "She came in here two months ago with a full cargo, and wanting repairs. They were made, but before they were finished every man of the crew had deserted. The Dolphin picked up enough men with difficulty, after waiting here several weeks, to take her home. It seems that Stocks had got all his crew in debt to him, and nothing was to be made by their sticking to the ship, so they cut. We shan't get home much behind him—rather ahead, I think, since he crimped a lot of land-lubbers."

"Crimped them?" asked Lily. "Wouldn't they go voluntarily?"

"No. He drugged 'em and stowed 'em aboard. They waked up at sea, too late to help themselves. He would have had trouble if I'd been here a little sooner. As it was, the consul tried to bring him to book, but his second mate went off when the men did, and the first mate stuck to it that they had had nothing to do with your disappearance from this island. Lack of evidence against 'em was all that saved 'em. We may come across the Dolphin again, for we sail in the morning."

Accordingly, before the young people were awake on the following morning, the Annie Colton was standing out to sea, under a full press of canvas.

We need not dwell upon the small incidents of the uneventful weeks that followed.

Fair winds continued to waft the Annie Colton on her way. Blue skies and untroubled seas attended her.

They passed coral isles so near that the spicy odours were wafted to them from the unseen shores. They floated over waters so clear that they gazed fathoms down at the coral beds with their unequal-

led beauty and variety of colouring. They saw radiant-hued fish darting in sportive wantonness, and more than once the huge fin of a shark was visible above the waters. Sea-gulls followed them with unwearied wing, subsisting on the crumbs flung from the ship, and flying fish afforded endless amusement to our young adventurers. They saw an occasional waterspout in the distance, and other wonders of the deep, but gales were infrequent, and no hurricane again tossed the ship in its furious embraces.

The long voyage was duly accomplished. The cape was doubled in fine style, and in pleasant weather, to the relief of the captain, to whom the Horn was a regular bugbear, and who had greatly feared a gale in that vicinity.

The weather continuing agreeable, and the wind for the most part favourable, the Annie Colton made a moderately swift run up to Pernambuco, into which port she put for a supply of water and provisions, both of which were low.

During the two days passed at this port, Lily and Roland explored the town thoroughly, made themselves familiar with its three distinct portions, St. Antonio, Recife, and Boavista, and explored the town of Olinda, a suburb two or three miles distant.

They strolled through the dirty town of Pernambuco, with its narrow streets, its tall houses, and its strange-looking population. They bought fruits of the brightly-coiled, intelligent-looking negroes, paused to look at street dancers, and purchased sweetened limejuice by the glass in the open air—a beverage they did not desire a second time. They longed in vain to visit the lighthouse and the forts, and contented themselves with the minor attractions of the place.

Bickley was their constant and devoted attendant by day, insisting on carrying their bundles, and shaking his club, to which he adhered as to a faithful friend, at any Brazilian who dared gaze too long in admiration of lovely Lily. Indeed, he came near being ordered to a lock-up for his chivalrous defence of the little maiden from more than casual observation, and Lily and Roland half expected, whenever they went out, to hear some outraged native summon to Bickley's discomfiture a guardian of the peace.

But luckily no such mishap occurred. Both evenings in port were spent at the theatre, to which they were escorted by Captain Wexley, who got himself up in splendid style, as he believed. His blue-coat with brass buttons, his shirt-collar with two wings rising in a manner that threatened to sever his ears from the body corporate, his scarlet cravat, embroidered with gold butterflies with impossible wings, his green broadened waistcoat with gilt buttons, made up a figure which, once seen, was not easily to be forgotten. The climax was reached when the captain sopped his bushy hair plentifully with oil, perfumed his Bandana handkerchief, out of compliment to Lily, and took in his hands his heavy silver-headed cane.

In this resplendent attire the captain devoutly believed himself "the glass of fashion and the mould of form." He assumed a pompous air in consonance with his attire, and many of the natives fancied him an admiral in the navy at the very least.

Lily and Roland presented also a singular appearance in the clothing they had half outgrown, but both could afford to laugh at their appearance, and neither was troubled at it, or prevented from enjoying the performance at the theatre by wondering and curious glances.

They understood nothing of the performances, save what was made plain by gesture and pantomime, but they enjoyed looking at the dark-faced natives, the bright costumes, and all that was novel on the stage or in the audience.

While in port, Captain Wexley inquired if the Dolphin had put in at Pernambuco, but learned that she had not. He fancied that she had been left behind by the Annie Colton, and his satisfaction was correspondingly great. He was obliged to acknowledge, however, that it was possible she had chosen to put into Rio de Janeiro, instead of the more northern port.

Captain Wexley also made inquiries at Pernambuco concerning the existence of a piratical vessel, and was informed that the rumour was true, and that such a vessel was prowling about, preying upon treasure-ships from California.

"Then they won't touch us," said the captain, laughing. "Still, it'll do no harm to be on the safe side."

Acting on this idea, he procured a few fire-arms at a second-hand musket shop, a few rounds of ammunition, a ponderous old sword, much like a battle-axe, and other weapons. Roland borrowed money enough to purchase a pair of revolvers, with necessary cartridges, and also bought a small pistol for Lily, the young girl coaxing for the dangerous toy until Roland could no longer refuse her.

Thus armed and equipped, and amply provisioned, the voyage was resumed. The weather was not altogether equable after leaving Pernambuco, calms

being frequent, and the wind coming in fitful puffs, which aspect lasted for days and weeks.

They entered the Caribbean Sea with a strong puff of wind, which died out to a moderate and steady breeze that promised to continue.

They spoke occasional vessels, gaining every time stories of the rapacity and fearful cruelty of the pirate, whose chief was declared to be a New Grannadian, and an escaped convict of the worst possible description. As all kinds of vessels had been pressed into the California service, so all kinds of vessels were attacked by this pirate, who had hitherto resisted all attempts to capture him. A Spanish sloop-of-war was in quest of him, but so far the pirate had eluded the pursuer. It was the general belief that the pirate had a den somewhere among the islands to which he retired when pursuit became too hot for him.

Captain Wexley's face became often clouded now with anxiety. The voice and laughter of Lily often jarred on his tortured mind, for he feared more for the little maiden, in case of capture, than for all the fruits of his long labours.

Roland, too, shared his unspoken anxiety.

That which they feared came upon them at last.

One morning at daybreak, the cry was raised that a ship was in sight. All who were below hurried to the deck.

A ship was in plain view, not five miles distant, under full sail, and moving so as to intercept the course of the Annie Colton. She was a trim, neat schooner, built for speed evidently, and her hull was painted black.

Captain Wexley regarded her steadily through a glass, his face paling, as the conviction grew upon him that she was the pirate, and that she was in pursuit of him.

"That's no honest ship," he muttered, huskily. "She's too rakish for that. Look at her sharp bow, her raking masts, her jaunty appearance."

"She is the pirate!" echoed Mr. Randal, snatching the glass, and surveying the stranger.

"Crowd on all sail!" commanded the captain. "We'll run anyhow. We'll show the Annie Colton's heels. It won't do to give up without a struggle. They may massacre us in their disappointment at not finding money."

"We can't outrun that craft," said Mr. Randal, as the men obeyed orders.

"I don't know. A stern chase is a long chase. That Spanish sloop-of-war may be about somewhere. If it were not for Lily, you know—"

Mr. Randal appreciated the captain's reluctance to expose Lily to the gaze of the pirates. No so utterly lawless would not respect youth and innocence. To yield without a struggle seemed like giving up Lily to a fearful doom. To run seemed but putting off the inevitable capture.

The captain, Mr. Randal, and Roland, who had just come on deck, walked apart, to consult anxiously upon the best course of action.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

ROLAND brought a clear head and sound good sense to the consultation. He was no less anxious to escape the clutches of the pirate, but he had better judgment than the captain, who was completely bewildered by the novel situation and anxious to give the enemy a chase.

"It won't do," said Roland, corroborating the views of the mate. "The schooner will overtake us. If it were nightfall now, I should say run. But we are in broad day. The sun is coming up, and the schooner has us at her mercy. It is useless to struggle. We must surrender."

"And Lily?" suggested the captain.

"Lily must stay below," responded Roland, with a pale face. "You must see, captain, if we run and put the schooner to the trouble of chasing us, it will go harder with Lily and all of us. They may kill us all in their anger, for they will interpret our flight as a sure sign of treasure. We cannot fight, for she must be well armed. It only remains to let her come near. Tell her what we are, and let the pirate search the ship. By so doing, they may let us go about our business. It seems unmanly to surrender without a blow, but what can we, a handful of unarmed men, for we are little better, what can we do against a ship full of pirates?"

Roland's words commended themselves from their sober earnestness and sense. His arguments could not be refuted. It was the part of wisdom to yield where a struggle would be madness.

The two mates assented to the young man's views. The captain, anxious as he was to defend his ship and passengers, acknowledged that a surrender was the only sensible course.

His decision was strengthened as he marked that the schooner was every minute lessening the distance between her and her quarry, and also by the fact that a shot came booming towards the ship, as an order for her to lie to.

"We must stop and hear what she has to say, my lads," said the captain, with an effort. "Heave the ship to!"

In a moment the ship lay rocking upon the water, with her head to the wind and her sails flapping. The schooner approached leisurely, like a spider advancing upon a fly which he knows to be securely meshed.

The men gathered at the side to watch her approach. The captain wondered how he could have been foolish enough to think to defend himself against such an enemy, with a few muskets in the hands of whalers unused to such weapons.

As she came nearer, and the sun slowly arose above the watery horizon, it was seen that her decks were crowded, and that two guns of large size were in readiness to play a part in any conflict. The sunshine, too, glittered on small hand-weapons, and it was plain that the pirates were thoroughly and efficiently armed at every point.

On came the schooner, steadily and gracefully, her full sails steady to the breeze.

Roland went below to communicate the tidings of their peril to Lily.

He found her in her room, completely attired. She had never looked more beautiful to him than now, with her glorious eyes glowing like stars, her hair floating like waves of purest, palest gold over her rounded shoulders, her cheeks flushed, her sweet mouth as red as the petals of a wild rose.

At that moment he could have wished her plain. Such surpassing beauty had suddenly become a dangerous gift.

He greeted her with the usual morning kiss, and Lily hastened to tie on her hat, exclaiming:

"You are up early, Roland. I meant to be out first. How still the ship is. Are we becalmed? or has someone fallen overboard?"

"Neither, Lily. We are lying to. Did you hear a gunshot a few minutes since?"

"I heard a noise like distant thunder," replied Lily, wondering. "I thought it was thunder until I saw how pleasant the morning was."

"It was a gunshot from the pirate schooner," said Roland, with more calmness than he felt. "She is coming up to us now."

Lily almost reeled, and she clung to her lover with a frightened face.

"The pirates will search our vessel for gold, and when they find us to be simple whalers they may let us go. You had better stay in your room, Lily, so as not to be seen more than can be helped. Be brave, darling."

"I will," said Lily, recovering her self-possession in some degree. "Do not worry about me, Roland. They will surely let us go when they find out what we are."

The young couple became so positive in this belief that they were almost hopeful. Roland remained with Lily a little while, and then, in compliance with her request, stowed his revolvers on his person, and went on deck in quest of news.

As soon as he had gone, Lily secured her pistol in her bosom, and sat down to await events.

Mindful of her anxiety, Roland came down frequently to report the progress of the enemy's approach.

The last time he quitted her side and ascended to the deck, the schooner was alongside.

Her deck was crowded with nearly four-score men, as villainous a set of wretches as ever congregated upon the deck of a pirate vessel. Kanakas, negroes, with Spaniards and Portuguese, made up the motley assemblage. Their black-muzzled faces, unkempt hair, yellow and brown complexions, and bearded eyes, made up a collection of countenances rarely to be equalled in any prisons of the world.

They were well-disciplined, however, and not a pirate stirred when their chief sprang lightly on the deck of the Annie Colton.

He was a man of middle age, an escaped convict, as report had said. He was tall and athletic, with a wonderful development of chest and limb. His head was round, of the bullet shape, and his hair was cropped short. He wore his beard in a tangled mass. His eyes were small, black, and serpent-like in shape and expression, and his entire appearance was sinister, repulsive, and forbidding.

He affected the corsair style of dress. A cap of black velvet braided with gold surmounted his cropped locks. He wore ordinary trousers, and above them a sort of tunic of scarlet velvet belted in at the waist, and embroidered lavishly with ornaments of gold. In his belt was a large array of handsomely mounted weapons. He carried in his hand a silver speaking trumpet, which was attached to his neck by a scarlet cord.

"What ship is this?" he demanded, as Captain Wexley emerged from a group and advanced to receive him.

"The Annie Colton, whaling vessel, bound to Brixham, from the North Pacific whaling grounds," replied the captain. "I am her commander, Captain Wexley."

The pirate uttered a curse, and fairly glared at the captain.

The dress of the commander and his men pro-

claimed the truthfulness of the former. The grim, greasy deck, the foul smells, everything about her proclaimed that the Annie Colton was a whaleship, although she had been originally a merchant-vessel. "I'll take a look for myself," said the pirate-chief. "Here, boys, a dozen of you search the ship, while I take a peep at the cabin and the log-book."

A dozen of his men sprang to do his bidding. The chief descended to the cabin, attended by the captain and by Roland, who wished to be near Lily.

The log-book was submitted to the pirate, who looked it over, cursing loudly. It confirmed the captain's story, and was tossed aside violently.

"What have you in all those rooms?" asked the pirate, nodding at the state-rooms. "Just look, boys," said he, addressing some of his men who had followed him to the cabin as body-guard.

The order was obeyed.

A cry was raised by the wretches when Lily's door was opened, and Lily was discovered seated in her room, her face turned from the gaze of the intruders.

"What is it, boys?" asked the chief, who had seated himself coolly in the captain's chair.

"It is my sister whom they have discovered," said Roland. "She retired to her room until the search should be over."

"Fetch her out, boys, if she is pretty," said the pirate, with an air of interest.

The men essayed to do his bidding, but Roland dashed them aside, regardless of consequences, and drew Lily out into the cabin with a gentleness and tenderness that calmed her.

The pirate sprang up at sight of her.

Lily's bright beauty touched his fiery heart at once.

He muttered his admiration in Spanish, and then exclaimed, in English:

"She is a prize worth a ship of treasure. What eyes! what hair! Who are you, fair lady?"

Lily could not reply. She felt abashed by the pirate's bold glances, and Roland answered for her.

"She is my sister. Miss Lawrence, of Brixham. We are on our way home."

"I regret to interrupt your journey," said the chief, with Spanish politeness; "but your sister has taken my heart captive. So young! so beautiful! A star of heaven! I love bright eyes and rosy lips, but never have I seen a maiden so lovely as this! I shall not let her go easily."

The pirate's men now entered the cabin, and reported that the ship was veritably a whale-ship, and that she was loaded with oil.

They expected that this announcement would meet with a burst of fury. The chief, however, was too much absorbed in Lily to give expression to much disappointment.

"Better luck next time," he said, philosophically. "This is the second whale-ship we've captured this week. The men of the first ship joined our band. Let us see what these men have to say."

He led the way to the deck, commanding Lily and Roland to accompany him. The others all followed.

On deck he made a speech to the crew of the Annie Colton, inviting them to join his band; but one and all refused.

He seemed in a good humour, notwithstanding his disappointment in regard to money, and informed the overjoyed Captain Wexley that he was free to resume his course.

"This young lady is my prisoner," he said, turning to Lily.

"Where she goes I will go," said Roland, clasping Lily's waist.

"Very well, then," said the chief, coolly. "You can go, too. I've got a prison for just such fellows as you. Come to think, I want you. The girl may be obstinate, and I can subdue her by torturing you."

At this juncture the irrepressible Bickley rushed forward and squared himself for a fight, flourishing his club wildly.

"We'll see if you are going to take them off before my eyes," he cried. "Come on, you cursed pirate!"

He made a dash at the chief, who called out:

"Put this madman on board the schooner. I'll see to him at my leisure."

Bickley was conveyed aboard the schooner. Resistance on the part of Roland would have been madness.

Encouraging Lily by a whispered allusion to their weapons of defence, and to the dangers they had already safely passed, he submitted to be carried with her on board the pirate craft.

A moment later the schooner swung off, and the two vessels went their separate ways, the Annie Colton, in despair at the fate of her passengers, to the northward; the schooner striking towards the south-west.

"Home again!" said the pirate, through his silver trumpet. "We must water and provision anew. Crowd on sail!"

His order was executed. Bickley was thrust into



the hold, Lily and Roland were taken to the cabin and the schooner continued on the course in which she had been interrupted by the appearance of the Annie Colton.

(To be continued).

**THE TRIALS OF A WIFE SEEKER.**—A "commercial gentleman" recently sought to obtain a wife through the medium of an advertisement. He began the experiment as a joke, but a dainty note seems to have converted his intended amusement into a serious purpose. The usual preliminary correspondence led, of course, to a meeting place being fixed, and the joker fell into his own trap. He had to confront a host of admirers instead of one, and was forcibly dragged into a private room of the Castle Inn, Rochdale, where a judge was selected, and a jury empanelled to try the prisoner on the charge of seeking to obtain a wife by means hurtful to society at large. The culprit, before evidence was adduced, expressed a wish to say a few words, and said he at first inserted the advertisement for a joke. He had obtained 50 or 60 letters, and out of the number he had only answered the one from the lady in question, because it was a very nice note from a young lady, and by the way it was expressed he took a fancy to her. If he deserved killing for his grave offence, they might kill him; and here the dupe looked the picture of misery. He was a native of London. Oh, it seemed to be known who he was. He must say that his intention to the young lady was most honourable. The counsel for the defence pleaded that his client had only 8s. 6d. in his possession, and hoped the damages would be mitigated to this sum. The jury returned a verdict for 1l. 10s. damages, to be spent in a punch bowl. The prisoner had not the money; but a friend lent him 5s., and he tendered 8s. 6d. The result gave great dissatisfaction to the jury, and some proposed to "teem" him, while others suggested that he should leave his watch in pledge with the landlord. Neither was carried out, but the 8s. 6d. was accepted, and ultimately the unfortunate young man was escorted to the door, where 200 or 300 people had assembled to witness his departure. No sooner had he gained his liberty than he took to his heels, followed by an immense crowd, who called after him "wife-hunter." He fled with great swiftness, and outdistanced the crowd; but, as misfortune seemed his doom, he rushed into the arms of a policeman, who detained him until he ascertained the real facts of the case. Having regained his freedom, he again made good use of his locomotive powers, and finally disappeared.

**LIFELIKE IN DEATH.**—The description given of the different appearances presented by the dead after the battles of the Alma and Inkerman will be in the memory of many. The retention in death of the last attitude in life; the varied expressions stamped on the features indicative of the last emotions—whether of enthusiasm, menace, hope, or resignation—were variously described. As if the last thoughts were prayerful, or connected with the homes and faces which the poor fellows were never to see again, the features generally bore the expression of a smile, or one of piety and calmness, and rarely one of a vindictive or painful character. We have recently met with an interesting and suggestive paper by Dr. Brinton, a military surgeon, "On Instantaneous Rigor, as the occasional accompaniment of sudden and violent death." Dr. Brinton states that frequently, in passing over a field of battle shortly after the close of action, he has been struck with the extraordinary attitudes presented by the bodies of those who had fallen, with wounds apparently instantaneously fatal, as of the head and heart. In many of these the body was rigid throughout, and the position was unquestionably that of the last moment of life. The muscles, he says, had, as it were, been surprised by death, and the limbs remained set and fixed in the posture held at the moment of the reception of the fatal wound. He relates several instances that came within his own observation, as well as others gathered from the accounts of eye-witnesses. A soldier, apparently about seventeen or eighteen years of age, had been shot through the heart. The right arm was raised above the head, and rigidly fixed. The hand still held the cap with which he had been cheering on his comrades at the last moment of life. A peaceful smile was on his face. Another soldier was found, after the battle of Williamsburg, shot through the forehead, as he was climbing over a low fence. One hand, partially clenched, and raised to the level of the forehead, presented the palm forward, as if to ward off an approaching evil. But perhaps the most remarkable are the following:—This case proves the possibility of instantaneous rigor following gunshot injuries of the head. While a detail of soldiers were foraging, they suddenly came upon a party of cavalry dismounted. The latter immediately sprang to their sides;

a volley, at about two hundred yards' range, was fired at them, apparently without effect, as they all rode away, with the exception of one trooper. He was left standing, with one foot in the stirrup, one hand, the left, grasping the bridle-rein and mane of his horse; the right hand clenching the barrel of his carbine near the muzzle, the butt of the carbine resting on the ground. The man's head was turned over his right shoulder, apparently watching the approach of the attacking party. Some of the latter were about to fire a second time, but were restrained by the officer in charge, who directed them to advance and take the soldier alive; and he was called upon to surrender, without response. Upon a near approach and examination he was found to be rigid in death, in the singular attitude above described. Great difficulty was experienced in forcing the mane of the horse from his left hand, and the carbine from his right. When the body was laid upon the ground the limbs still retained the same position, and the same inflexibility. The horse had remained quiet, being fastened by a halter. In a report by M. Chenu, a description is given of the attitudes of the dead in battle during the Crimean and Italian campaigns. Many retained the attitude in which they were when struck, and appeared to have passed instantly from life to death, without agony and without convulsions.

**MIXED MARRIAGES.**—In Victoria the mixture of races is already producing noticeable results. According to a report of the Registrar-General—and Victoria can boast of a really scientific statistician—a gradual change is taking place in the national type of the population. It is stated that in consequence of the variance of nationality, there is an important movement continually going on by the process of marriage, and although this change has been little heeded by those effecting it, yet it is one that must influence the social and political development of the future life of the colony. The distinctive characteristics of English, Irish, and Scotch emigrants are rapidly breaking down, and another national type is being developed in the shape of an Australian people. In order to determine the extent to which existing native types are being fused, the Registrar-General refers to the nationality of the married population. Out of 25,908 males who married in Victoria during the six years from 1861 to the end of 1866, there were 12,564 Englishmen, of whom 7,152, or 56 per cent., married English women. On the other hand, out of 25,908 women who married in the same period, 9,718, or 37 per cent., were English, and of them 7,152, or nearly 74 per cent., married Englishmen. Again, as many as 3,065, or nearly 10 per cent., of the Englishmen married Irish women; as a striking contrast to which only 573, or less than 6 per cent., of the English women married Irishmen. During the same period 4,422 Irishmen married the same number of Irish women, the former being 84 per cent. of the Irishmen, and the latter 48 per cent. of the Irish women who married. Of 59 Chinese males who married, 28, or 47 per cent., married Irish women; half that number, or 24 per cent., married English women; 11, or 19 per cent., married Australian-born women; 2, or 3 per cent., married Scotch women; and the same number and percentage married Welsh and German women. Out of every 100 marriages, 28 were between English males and English females, 17 were between Irish males and Irish females, and 9 were between Scottish males and females, showing that the distinction of race was preserved among little more than half the total marriages.

The *South London Press* has done good service in ridding us of the horrible fears we have been led to entertain about butter being made from Thames mud. It will be remembered that an enterprising Frenchman announced the discovery of a process by which the thicker part of our great river could be turned to account as part of a free—and easy—breakfast table. The idea was a rather dreadful one, but food is dear and mud plentiful, and then, after all, is there not a popular notion about London porter being manufactured partly of similar materials without affecting the consumption of the article? The enterprising Frenchman did not tell the nature of the process, but he handed over a specimen of the results, which being submitted for analysis was found to be a grease "very dark in colour, offensive in odour, and from the nature of the impurities it contained, was evidently extracted from some waste material containing silica and earthy matters." At the same time, four specimens of Thames mud were tested, and found to contain fat in very minute quantities; but the chemist, on the whole, could not believe that this "could be profitably extracted without adding some other source of fatty refuse." He was, therefore, of opinion that the Frenchman must have kept back part of the truth as to the origin of his grease, and we should be very glad, indeed, if he would keep back the grease as well, at least so far as butter is

concerned. It is satisfactory to find that there is small probability of our consuming Thames mud believing it to be butter; but the entire affair leaves an impression that we are liable to be cheated somehow. We may not have to swallow the stuff that ought to go down to Barking, but there is a chance of our having to swallow something almost as bad.

## THE VEILED LADY.

BY THE

Author of "Fairleigh," "The Rival Sisters," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

For an instant the youth's breast seemed to swell, and his mind to tremble with the weight of horror which those words cast upon it; then in a quivering voice he ejaculated:

"You cannot be in earnest? I am innocent of any wrong! I could not do a criminal act."

The detective smiled incredulously, and clutching his arm, continued:

"You can stake all the counterfeits you've got that I'm in earnest! Come along, I've no time to parley."

The youth's face turned a ghastly white, his brain reeled, and he would have fallen to the floor had not the officer held him firmly.

The shopman, somewhat alarmed, ordered water, and it being brought, the youth's temples were bathed, and he returned to consciousness—the consciousness of grief—of terror.

"I cannot believe him guilty of wrong intent," said the shopman, sympathetically. "He has an honest face."

"So have a good many," grunted the detective.

"Ask him his name," suggested the shopman.

"Well, youngster, out with it!" mumbled the officer, impatiently.

The terrible ordeal had enveloped the mind of the youth in a sort of lethargic stupor, partaking somewhat of the nature of coma, and their words sounded dimly on his ear. Raising his eyes, he looked around—the realisation of his position again came upon him in a flood of agonizing sorrow. He tried to think, but could only remember that he had no name, and again his head sank upon his breast.

"You see he don't answer," said the detective.

"He's one of a gang, so along with you."

As he spoke he started towards the door, rudely dragging the youth after him. The quick motion awakened the youth to a sense of his awful position, and in a voice ringing with piteous anguish he cried, using the first words that his tortured mind suggested:

"Oh, send to Mr. Wilton—"

"Shut your mouth!" snarled the officer. "It takes you too long to manufacture crammies. Come on!"

Oh, what a look of blended scorn, anger, and pain intense rested upon that pale face! Oh, what an imploring light of sorrow emitted from those eyes now shining with a glare almost frightful in its mute agony! But all—all in vain, and on he went—on, on, towards the gloomy abode of felons, the region of darkness, the home of despair!

As the youth was borne along through the hurrying crowds that thronged the streets, and saw the smiling, happy faces around him, heard the merry peals of laughter that at intervals rose upon the air, it seemed that his heart would sink, in its utter woe and desolation. But the most tender sight that met his eyes—the one which caused the tears to tremble upon his long lashes—the one which made him feel more keenly his total loneliness, his dreadful solitude, his agonizing position—was a sweet, calm-faced mother pressing her lips to the brow of a young naval officer, her eyes dim with love, while near them stood a captain, and on his genial features the sorrow-stricken, tempest-tossed youth read the word father! And his being trembled, his flame of life seemed suddenly to expire, his brain gave way under the press of anguish, his heart and spirit cried out—in dumb but electrical tones, which heaven must have heard:

"Oh, God, give me a mother! give me a father!"

And as if those words, in spirit voice spoken, were the last gasps of his earth-weary nature, he again sank insensible upon the officer's arm.

Still London glittered in all its life and beauty—still the burnished coach of affluence thundered o'er the streets—still the lightsome jest and happy laugh floated upon the breeze—still the sun's bright rays made nature glad, and gave brilliancy to the earth, and all was joy and merriment; but where, oh, where was the orphan child of the fiery heart?

None knew, and if any knew they cared not.

Slowly the declining sun cast his last beams of shimmering amber over gorgeous mansion and busy street. Night followed fast in gloomy shade upon his receding light, the stars appeared and dotted with pearl-like drops the blue dome above, and down in

the great city beneath, the gas jets flickered o'er the stony streets, and shone upon moving thousands.

The evening passed, the stars in heaven's broad expanse grew lighter, the inhabitants of the metropolis were at rest, save those who by pleasure, charity, or vice detained, were perambulating the lonely streets. And still the hours flew on, and near was the silent midnight.

In a lonely police cell, upon a miserable couch, with his raven curls falling in confusion around his pallid brow, lay the youth of the fiery heart.

Presently a wild, unearthly shriek echoed through and through the narrow aisles with a dismal sound, followed by desperate attempts to rend asunder iron bars, while, in a voice seething with maniacal rage and remorse, came the words:

"Ha! ha! ha! away—away! my head is bursting! Quick—quick! take that iron away from my heart, it burns, it blisters, it snaps! Can't you hear?—won't you hear?—where are you, Mary? I'm dying; oh, won't you come to me? Sweet—sweet Mary; once—so bright—come, come—oh, you will—yes, yes—ha!"

"Stop your yelling, or I'll make you!" shouted the policeman on duty, as, on his regular tour of inspection, he paused at the cell.

The demoniac wails moderated to suppressed groans while he was in the vicinity, but he had no sooner receded than the confusion again began.

As the first of those dreadful words reverberated through the passages and cells the youth raised his head, and clasping his hands, while his eyes in fervent supplication were upward raised, he murmured:

"Oh, Father in Heaven, has it at last come to this? I here in this den of infamy, where the cries of the felon and maniac mingle on my ear in creaking harshness, and strike a nameless horror to my heart! Oh, why, why is it? Why am I alone upon life's tempestuous wave—why am I at the mercy of the ruthless wind—why, oh, Father, am I desolate?"

And he again sank upon the rude couch, his body quivering with the terrible grief which permeated his very soul.

Anon low prolonged moans rose upon the prison's fetid atmosphere, and at the grating of one of the cells appeared a female form, only partially dressed, her thin bony fingers, like talons, clasping the bars, her long and tangled hair falling over her shoulders in weird disorder, while her eyes, large and glittering, gave a painful, frightful brilliancy to her sallow, emaciated face. Clinging to the iron, she swung herself forward and backward, meantime articulating in sharp, hollow groans:

"He, he, he—oh, oh! What am I? Why, they call me—they point, scoff, laugh, ha! ha!—they call me—oh, no! I was a woman once—yes, yes—but long, long ago! Now I am—oh, Heaven, what? I think I remember—yes, I was a girl once, and I had a mother, and she loved me. But I'm mad now! Oh, memory, die! Who cares for me? Nobody, nobody! Once I was beloved and beautiful, but love for gold and vain show was the foundation, and—what then? Oh, no more—the tale oft repeated, and doubly cursed! Oh, my head, my shattered heart! Oh, Heaven, take me! No, no, not that, I am not fit—but kill, kill me—will you, will you, and let me have rest?"

"And still in discordant tones, these wails sound coarse and unnatural upon my ear," mused the youth: "still these steps in crime surround me! And must I lay here, must I be subjected to this? And yet even now steals o'er my mind a thought which brings happiness even here. Oh, Father, forgive me; I appreciate not thy blessings. I forget that I am innocent, forgot that dear knowledge, if the heart and conscience are pure and true, what matters it where the body may be? And yet it is but human to repine—and I am no more. But I will try with thy aid to wait and hope."

An instant he paused, and then added, with soul-felt earnestness:

"Oh, my mother, if thou art in heaven, canst thou see thy child to-night? Oh, wilt thou give me an angel's blessing, that I may be strong for the ordeal of the morrow?"

Morning dawned, but to the youth the darkness seemed to grow more dense, for no ray of hope shone in upon his grief-laden mind, or came to cheer his heart.

At nine o'clock he, in common with the other prisoners, was conducted to the Police-court. On the way many curious glances were bestowed upon him.

The youth felt deep compassion for those forlorn, degraded creatures, yet he could not repress a sensation of loathing as he looked upon them. Indeed, their very presence, the very atmosphere which encircled them, made it laborious for him to breathe.

At length they arrived at the police-court, and were taken by a rear entrance into an ante-room, which communicated with the dock in the court-

room. Those whose cases were first upon the docket were sent into the dock; the remainder were obliged to wait until the first portion was disposed of.

Among the latter was the youth, and now with its full force, with every terrible fear, with every harrowing doubt, with every awful conjecture, came the tide of agonizing realisations, rushing o'er his mind like devastating waters o'er a tiny boat. He lived—he breathed—but his brain seemed like a heavy weight, pressing upon his head and his heart, and a cold chill diffusing itself through every fibre and artery of his being.

At length he was led into the dock.

The court-room was nearly empty. The majority of the cases had been disposed of, and the crowd of loungers, witnesses, and spectators had diminished, until only a few were left. A small number of clientless lawyers still lingered at the bar, waiting probably with the hope of obtaining a guinea for saying a useless word in behalf of some abject criminal.

The magistrate—a rather fine-looking man, whose iron-grey hair was brushed straight back from a forehead high and intellectual—appeared restless, and anxious to reach the end of the docket. Bending over his desk, he said, addressing the clerk:

"What is the next case?"

"Uttering and attempting to pass counterfeit money."

"Call it," ordered the magistrate, peremptorily.

In charge of the constable, the youth was conducted to the dock at the right of the magistrate's bench.

His dark eyes glowed with a mild, sorrowful light of eloquent pleading; his face was very pale, but wore a tranquil look of resignation; his lips were firmly compressed, but twitched at intervals, as grim despair hovered o'er his mind and suggested dreadful thoughts of conviction.

"You are charged with uttering and attempting to pass counterfeit coin, knowing the same to be worthless and fraudulent. What say you, are you guilty or not guilty?"

The youth's brilliant eyes were upraised, and in a clear, firm voice, made so by the consciousness of truth, came the words:

"Not guilty."

"Witnesses, step forward and be sworn," ordered the clerk.

The shopman and detective advanced and received the oath in due form.

"Your name, sir?" demanded the magistrate, addressing the salesman, who was now in the witness-box.

"James Hartley," he answered.

"What is your business?"

"I am employed as a bookseller's assistant."

"Do you know the prisoner?" queried the magistrate, indicating Frank.

"I never saw him until yesterday, your worship," replied the witness.

"Where did you see him then?"

"In the shop where I am employed. He purchased a volume of Dryden's poems."

"What did he tender you in payment?"

"A five-shilling piece."

"Did you tell him it was not good?" pursued the magistrate.

"I did, your worship?"

"What did he say?"

"He said: 'I am as much surprised as you are, and gave me another, the same as the former.'"

"Was that genuine?"

"It was not."

"Did you tell him it was not good?"

"I did."

"What did he say?"

"He said: 'I will show you all I have, and perhaps we can obtain a clue—at that moment the detective arrested him.'"

"And this is all you know of the affair?"

"It is."

"You may step down," said the magistrate.

"Take the oath," commanded the clerk, addressing the detective.

The latter obeyed.

"What is your name?" asked the magistrate.

"Solon Pierce," responded the officer.

"What is your business?"

"I am a detective."

"State the particulars of the arrest," ordered the magistrate.

"I was in the bookseller's shop yesterday when the defendant entered. He called for a volume of Dryden's poems. It was given to him. He tendered a five-shilling piece in payment. It was a counterfeit; he drew another; that also was spurious. I then arrested him. He fainted twice on the way to the station."

"Well?"

"I searched him in the station-house."

"And what did you find?"

"I took from his vest-pocket ten five-pound notes."

"Was that all?"

"No, your worship, I found in the pocket of his coat twenty pounds."

The youth held more firmly to the railing. It seemed as if his heart had ceased to vibrate.

"Were they genuine?" continued the magistrate, his brow clouding.

"They were not, your worship," rejoined the witness; "they were all counterfeits."

"Did he have any other upon his person?"

"He did, your worship."

"What were they?"

"There was only one, and that was a fifty-pound note."

"Was it genuine?"

"It was."

"Did you have any conversation with him?"

"No. I spoke to him while in the cell, but he lay staring at me and made no reply."

"Is that all?" inquired the magistrate.

"Yes, in relation to this case."

"Ah," mused the magistrate, thinking the words of the witness significant; "do you know the prisoner?"

"I do not."

"Had you seen him previous to yesterday?"

"Yes."

"Where?" queried the magistrate, with renewed interest.

"I saw him the night before last in a gambling house."

The brow of the magistrate grew darker, and he asked:

"What was he doing there?"

"He was drinking, and playing at faro."

Oh, what pangs rent the youth's heart and tore his brain as he heard these words. How his innocence was turned to a poisoned arrow and thrust back upon him with bitterness.

"What else?"

"He was fighting, and daring others to fight with him."

"Why did you not arrest him?"

"It wasn't time," smiled the detective.

"He appears to be a very depraved character," said the magistrate, reflectively. "You may step down, witness."

During the testimony the youth had strained every nerve to keep himself from sinking. He too plainly saw that he could get no mercy—saw, and with dismay, that every little incident was magnified into a crime of itself, and his virtue turned against him like a flaming sword of sin.

As the last witness left the box, the door of the court-room opened, and Mr. Wilton walked in.

As the youth saw him a faint hope struggled for life in his breast. Extending his hands, he huskily murmured:

"Oh, you will help me?—you will?"

"Oh, my dear Frank, if possible," answered Mr. Wilton, and advanced to his side.

The magistrate now directing his eye upon the youth, said:

"Have you anything to say? Have you any witnesses?"

That fine form was slowly drawn up, and while truth shone from his eyes, he replied:

"I am innocent! I have no witnesses; this gentleman at my side is the only one who knows me—the only one who can testify in my behalf."

"Do you wish to be sworn, sir?" said the magistrate, addressing Mr. Wilton.

"I am a member of the Society of Friends," responded Mr. Wilton, very humbly, "and I cannot take the oath; but I will affirm my words according to the Quaker custom."

The magistrate regarded Mr. Wilton very keenly, and then turning to the clerk, ordered:

"Administer the affirmation of the Quaker religion."

It was done, and after asking his name, and that of the youth, the magistrate continued:

"Do you know this youth?"

"I do; he is a son of a dear friend of mine now deceased."

"Do you know anything of his character?"

"I think he is—"

"I did not ask you what you thought, sir," interrupted the magistrate, irritably; "I asked you what you knew?"

Mr. Wilton bowed, coughed, and then rejoined:

"I have not had him with—"

"Will you answer my question, sir? Do you know anything of his character?" interposed the magistrate, with professional impatience.

"To the best of my knowledge, sir, he is upright."

"Do you know how these counterfeits came into his possession?"

"I do not."



"Have you given him any money?"  
 "I have."  
 "What was it?"  
 "A fifty pound note."  
 "Hum—hum, was it genuine?"  
 "Of course it was!" answered Mr. Wilton, with dignity.  
 "You may step down, sir," mused the magistrate.  
 "Very bad case!—only known him three days!—evidence conflicting!—very bad! I must commit him for trial—an aggravated case!"  
 The youth's face became the hue of snow, his dark orbs were distended and raised towards Heaven with a glance of mute supplication which might have caused angels to weep, while his slender fingers closed with the clasp of despair over the railing, until the blue veins stood out upon his hands.  
 Mr. Wilton's head was bowed upon his chest, and his arms folded across it, while his face wore a look of sorrow.  
 The magistrate ordered him to be committed to Newgate for trial.

## CHAPTER XXV.

As those dreadful words struck upon the agonized senses of the forsaken youth, his every nerve seemed to harrow to fear, and his mind to conjure frightful forms to add to his torture.

But none felt sympathy, and in his mechanical way the clerk turning toward the youth, said:

"The court commits you—"  
 "Stop! Heaven has otherwise awarded!" sounded in low, thrilling, yet fitfully distinct tones.

The clerk sank into his chair as though the hand of death had smote him.

For a moment an ominous stillness prevailed, and even the magistrate was stricken with amazement.

The horror and anguish which had enveloped the heart and mind of the youth, however, floated away, and a tranquillity as sweet as it was inexplicable pervaded his being.

Slowly, at the left of the magistrate, and near the official bench, arose the form and weird white face of the Veiled Lady, shrouded in folds of sombre hue. Gradually that queenly form arose until its noble proportions, in all their bewildering grandeur and majesty, were plainly visible.

With the grace of Juno in every motion, that long white arm was raised until the translucent forefinger pointed directly at the magistrate. It paused, and remained motionless in all its wonderful beauty, in all its fear-inspiring sublimity.

None spoke. A charm, an irresistible, potent influence held all in abeyance.

As Samuel Wilton saw that gloomy, silent figure, his face became livid, his form shook as if from a stroke of palsy, and with a shrill unearthly shriek he fell to the floor.

And still the youth gazed upon her with no thought of fear, but with a smile of thankfulness, while in his heart he blessed her.

The suspense was becoming intolerable. The magistrate could endure it no longer, and tremblingly turning toward the spectral visitant, waved his hand as if in assent.

The specter-woman, or spirit, disappeared as mysteriously as it had come.

With her departure all breathed easier.

By a great effort, and in a husky voice, the magistrate commanded:

"Adjourn the court!"

The order was given, the court-room was cleared, and men left it with a vague sense of what had occurred, and feeling as if they had just awoke from a vision of terror.

Two constables raised the inanimate form of Samuel Wilton, and by the application of cold water soon reanimated him.

He stared at them vacantly, sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands, while within his breast a terrible struggle was progressing, which at intervals caused his form to tremble. At length he arose, composed, but very pale.

For some moments after the adjournment of the court, the magistrate remained rigid, his hands clasped together, his face a blank, and his eyes fixed steadfastly upon the floor.

The magistrate obtained a partial control of himself, ordered the youth to be taken from the dock, and then motioned him and Mr. Wilton to follow him to his private room.

Both complied, and arriving there seated themselves opposite him.

"You saw her?" queried the judge, fixing his eyes upon Mr. Wilton.

"I saw her," gasped Mr. Wilton, and shivered.

"You saw her?" repeated the magistrate in that hard, hollow voice, and turning toward Frank.

"I saw her!" answered the youth, and a heavenly smile rested upon his features.

"She has saved you!" cried the magistrate, tremulously. "God! you are free!"

Mr. Wilton clutched at the arm of his chair, and groaned.

The youth lifted his dark eyes, brilliant in their mild, wondrous beauty, toward Heaven, and clasping his hands, devoutly murmured:

"Thou hast heard my prayer! Oh, Heaven, I thank thee!"

And with his arms folded across his breast, with his head bowed in reverence, and with a slow, dignified step he moved from the room.

He felt a breath of cold air—he started back—and his eye caught one glimpse of that shadowy form as it swept by like a spirit.

Slowly—and with strange emotions circling around his heart, which one moment lightened it with joy and the next depressed it with grief—he continued on towards his home.

Suddenly he raised his eyes. What bristles before unperceived were spread out around him! What new life and vigour seemed to animate the populace! Imaginative boy! It seemed to him that material things had changed, that the edifices of brick and stone were looks more grand and imposing. He did not think to attribute his enthusiasm to the change in his own condition. He forgot for the moment that our own feelings control in a measure the beauty of things around us, that our appreciation is increased or diminished as we are in joy or sorrow. No—the reaction from despair to happiness, from imprisonment to liberty, was so great, that his ideas were romantic and visionary to the last extreme. His was one of the natures which suffer acutely and enjoy intensely.

Almost before he was aware of it he stood opposite the Wilton mansion. He ascended the steps, and then paused, while returning to his mind came the thoughts of his short but dreadful experience within prison walls, and caused him to shudder.

He sighed, partly in horror at the remembrance, partly in thanksgiving at his release, and then opening the door, passed quickly through the halls, and ascended to his room.

Entering his apartment, he threw himself into a chair, and resting his head upon his hands, soliloquized:

"Once again I am saved, and this time from disgrace and a felon's home, by this dark-robed woman or spirit, who seems omnipresent. So grand, so beautiful, so delicate, yet so powerful, that her very presence sends terror to the hearts of men. Why is it? How comes this power? Surely it cannot be mortal, and yet the days of miracles are said to have passed. But this is a miracle as well as a marvel! When I revert to it hastily it seems like a wild, fantastic dream, an *ignis fatuus*, which in slumber I have chased."

He paused, was silent a moment, and then excitedly continued:

"Why did the magistrate experience such emotion—why did he evince such fear? But stranger still, and more significant was the agitation of Mr. Wilton. He was as one deprived of all strength, with every nerve paralyzed, utterly helpless! Oh, if I could but divine these things! If I could but tear away the veil of mystery which hangs over my life! Mystery? Ah, that causes other facts to recur to me, which later incidents have temporarily eclipsed. Yes, the condemning fact of having counterfeit coins and notes upon my person, and I as innocent of the knowledge as the babe which clings to its mother's neck. How did I come in possession of them? I cannot answer that—I can hardly think of it without again hearing those maniacal shrieks, and feeling as if I were once more within those cold, repulsive walls. I remember I had some bank notes which Mr. Tweed from time to time had given me. Before I went into that gambling house I had them; from that time until I went into the book-shop I did not look in my purse. How can I explain this? And again my perplexity is increased when I think of the counterfeits being taken from my coat pocket."

"Oh, the anguish of that moment—the dread which I feel even now! And as if to crush me to the earth, my presence, merely my presence, in that gambling-house was tortured into a crime! Oh, let me think no more of it! Let these disturbing thoughts leave me, for my mind needs rest! I know not the meaning of these strange acts. I can have no conception of them. I am merely a subject for invisible powers to work upon—a creature of circumstances."

And arising, he walked the room with his hands clasped behind him. A half-hour passed, and the youth continued to pace the floor with that even, regular step, while his face wore a pre-occupied look, and his thoughts seemed far, far away.

Presently he was interrupted by a knock upon the door, followed by the words:

"Mr. Wilton wishes your presence in the library."

"He does, does he?" muttered the youth, contemptuously. "Well, he shall be gratified this time, but not many more, for I would rather sweep the streets, and be where the atmosphere at least is congenial, than remain in this house, where everything has become so utterly detestable, and to me repulsive."

And with this emphatic declaration, he opened the door, and descending the stairs moved toward the library.

As he entered, Mr. Wilton raised his head from the desk whereon it had been resting, and with a sad, soft smile motioned him to a seat.

"Well, sir," queried Frank, impatiently, "what do you wish with me?"

Mr. Wilton sighed, dropped his eyes, and replied, in a low, wailing tone, which sounded very disagreeable upon his listener's ear:

"I want to tell you, my dear Frank, how thankful I am that you are again safe; but oh, my boy, what saved you?"

"Not you, most assuredly," returned the youth, somewhat resentfully.

Mr. Wilton's face became sanctimoniously reproachful, and he sorrowfully said:

"Oh, how can you speak so, my dear Frank, when you know how much I love you, when you know that you are all that is left of my dearest friend, when you know that I have laboured so to find you—I ask you, how can you treat me so harshly?"

A slight convulsion curled the youth's lip, and he responded:

"Very pathetic indeed! I think you showed your devotion in the court."

"Why, Frank, do you speak so coldly?" asked Mr. Wilton, glancing with piteous pleading upon him. "Will you not tell me?"

"Yes, I will, and so that you will understand it!" exclaimed Frank, indignant at what he thought to be assumed solicitude. "If you had cared so very much about me, your manner would have been different in the witness-box, and you would have stated facts as they were. Instead of that, you coughed, and stammered, and thought I was upright, and was to the best of your knowledge, but you hadn't known me but three days! Very pretty, wasn't it? Sounds very much like a loving guardian, doesn't it?"

Mr. Wilton groaned, worked his hands nervously together, and while his face grew solemn, rejoined:

"Oh, Frank, you hurt me cruelly by your unkind language. You don't comprehend how much I love you. But if I must reply to your unjust, unrighteous accusation, let me do it, by asking you what I could have said; what more could I have done? The very moment I tried to speak, some legal technicality stopped me, and very naturally I became embarrassed."

"Yes," interrupted the youth, bending forward, and gazing searchingly into his face, "but you were more embarrassed, more horrified when that dark, filmy form rose up before you. Can you tell me what caused your senses to desert you when she faced you?"

A slight tremor ran over Mr. Wilton's frame, but it went as suddenly as it came, and looking up with mouth half open, as if in stupid wonder, he answered:

"Of course I can tell you, my dear Frank; at that moment I was in grief upon your account, my mind was picturing the terrible life which threatened you; and is it strange, disturbed as I was, that the unlooked for appearance of such an appalling figure should deprive me of my senses? Not singular at all. You could with justice ask the clerk and magistrate the same question."

Still unsatisfied, still doubting, though he knew not why, the youth tapped the floor with his foot, and kept his head turned away from his companion.

For a few moments Mr. Wilton regarded him in silence, then arose, and with a fawning, conciliatory smile, said:

"Why do you not speak? Why do you turn away from me? Why do you pain me thus? Will you not believe my words?"

"What makes you think I doubt them?" queried the youth sharply.

The other winced, then the smile grew softer, and he quickly replied:

"Why, your looks, your manner, your motion! I am sensitive, susceptible to influence, and very impressionable. I can feel another's mistrust, or dislike, as keenly as if it were conveyed in words, and from you, my dear—dear boy, I can feel it quicker and more acutely, for I love you."

"Yes—yes!" mused the youth, bitterly, "I hear you, I hear many things in this wild life of mine; but what shall I believe? Put all I hear together, and it will make chaos; keep it separate, and each part is an instrument of pain, which is touched according to the torture, light or heavy, which is de-



[TRUE OR FALSE?]

sired: for me, I am weary of the sounds, one and all."

"And I am included?" cried Mr. Wilton, in grievous tones, "Oh, that I should live to hear my friend's child speak thus. Weary of me—of me, who loves him so!" and the tears stood in his eyes.

For a moment the youth regretted his words, and felt sad at having wounded his patron's feelings, then that repugnance to him and mistrust of him again arose, and with a careless wave of his hand, he returned:

"I pray you be calm, Mr. Wilton; you are too generous with your love and regret. I advise you to keep them and bestow them upon some one who is more appreciative than I am; and, by-the-bye, I wish to return the cheque you gave me a few days ago. I'm exceedingly obliged to you, I assure you, but I haven't needed it, from the fact that I have had enough of counterfeits!"

Mr. Wilton started, his eyes gleamed, then his cough suddenly troubled him, and it was some moments ere the spasm was over.

At length the violence of the attack had subsided, and again turning toward the youth, with that woe-begone expression, he sadly said:

"I cannot receive it. I gave it to you, as your father would have given a similar amount to me, or I to him, from the heart. I cannot tell the cause of your aversion to me, but I wish I could, and then I might banish it. I love you, Frank; I loved your father, my boy; and I wish you would try and like me for his sake!"

And in great distress Mr. Wilton clasped the youth's hand and wept over it, while his form quivered as if from intense feeling.

The youth was conquered. His tender heart would not allow him to witness such sorrow, and remain indifferent. Reproaching himself for his unjust doubts, he laid his hand gently upon Mr. Wilton's, and soothingly responded:

"I am sorry to have caused you so much sorrow, but I am hardly myself; pray forgive me."

"I will—oh, I will!" actually sobbed Mr. Wilton; "and now my heart is lighter. I know the anguish you have suffered, but now, my dear boy, all is forgiven, and we are friends, dear friends, are we not?"

"Yes," responded the youth, though a sudden repulsion caused him to recoil, and a quick pain at his heart denied the truth of his words.

"Oh, bless you for that, you have hushed the grief-wrought misgivings which have of late usurped the place of joy in my heart."

And with these words, uttered in a low quivering

voice, Mr. Wilton advanced and drew the youth to his breast.

Had the deadly embrace of the cobra been offered him, the youth could not have shrunk back with more horror.

Again that expression of desponding melancholy diffused itself over Mr. Wilton's features, and in injured tones he ejaculated:

"Why is this—why do you tear yourself away, and look at me so? I fear your words are not sincere."

"Pardon me," answered the youth, "I do not like to be embraced by men; it is entirely out of place, I assure you."

Mr. Wilton noticed not the derision which lingered in the last clause of the remark; but drawing down the corners of his mouth, and elevating his eyebrows, moaningly said:

"I'll try to remember, but I cannot always control my feelings, for my love is very strong, and sometimes bursts forth spontaneously, almost before I know it."

"Yes," thought the youth, "and like the volcano, sends grief and devastation wherever it goes," and suddenly raised his eyes.

A crafty smile lurked about Mr. Wilton's lips, and his eyes gleamed strangely, but as he met the youth's eye his expression again changed to one of singular softness.

The youth's mood was one of forced resignation, bitter coolness and despairing quietude, and he was obliged to obey its instincts. Suddenly arising, he walked by Mr. Wilton, hastily turned, and confronted him with:

"Versatility is desirable in actors, and useful when combined with good and great talent, but do you think it is suggestive of sincerity when displayed in emotions, when it flashes like lightning from tears to scorn, from love to subtlety? Ah, you do not speak! It is well, and wholly unnecessary. Although you cannot restrain your flood of lava-rushing love, yet you have supreme control of your features to their faintest lineament. It is irreconcilable, isn't it? but none the less a part of your very affectionate nature."

Mr. Wilton compressed his lips and worked his hands together in silence. At length he looked up wearily, as though patience had brought with it sorrow, and replied:

"It may be as you say in one sense. It is true that I have control over my features, but not over my emotions. Whatever there is within shines out upon my face, and sometimes thoughts melting and conflicting give an unpleasant expression to my face. I

have noticed it very often, wondered at it, regretted it, but so it is. To prove to you the truth of my words, is easy. At the moment you looked up, I was thinking of evil——"

"Evil, Mr. Wilton? Is it possible?"

The gentleman noticed not the sarcastic interruption, but continued:

"As I said, I was thinking of evil, and my thoughts were reflected upon my face. I changed my expression because I am sensitive, and dislike to have anyone see such a look upon my features. But my thoughts were connected with you. I was reflecting, and with a feeling of terror, upon the wicked man who assailed you in the gambling saloon."

"Ha! then that still lingers in your mind! Pray why has it such a lasting influence?"

And the youth looked steadily upon him. "Why? I wonder at the question. It is self-evident, it is because I wish to know your enemies—to protect you from them—to make your life easier."

So sincere was the tone, so convincing the manner, that the youth could not continue his ironical, cutting words, and in a mild, earnest tone, he queried:

"Then perhaps you will seek him—pursue him—and make him divulge the cause of his hatred?"

"I will!" exclaimed Mr. Wilton. "That was what I was coming at, but you preceded me. How singular it is that you should divine my thoughts and feelings at the same moment. There must be an electro-sympathetic current between us, in defiance of your dislike."

"Perhaps," mused the youth, becoming weary; "but I am not inclined to argue upon that point. I wish to feel that you will endeavour to apprehend this man—to secure him. Will you?"

"Again I say it shall be done, and by that means you will be brought to love me—I feel it. I will strain every nerve, and adopt every means at my command to reach that end."

"Thank you; I shall look forward to the result with interest. Now, I trust you will excuse me."

Mr. Wilton graciously signified his assent, and the youth left the library. As he entered his room, he perplexedly soliloquized:

"What Samuel Wilton is, baffles me; clouds, sunshine, stormy darkness and lightning gleams follow each other over his features in quick succession. He is a contradiction—a living paradox—a breathing anomaly! Oh, that I were a second *Œdipus* that I might solve the riddle of this modern Sphinx, though I should rather shrink from also accepting his subsequent fate."

(To be continued.)





[THE MAN IN THE CLOAK.]

# THE LOCKSMITH OF LYONS.

## CHAPTER III.

How exquisite is pleasure after pain!  
Why throbs my heart so turbulently strong,  
Pained at thy presence—this redundant joy,  
Like a poor miser, beggar'd by his store?

Young.

The locksmith was cleansing his hands when the tall and stately presence of General La Mothier darkened the doorway.

The artisan was singularly neat in his habits and dress, and this characteristic, added to his remarkable manly beauty of face and person, had already gained for him in La Croix Rousse the appellation of "Handsome Robert." He turned as the general paused at the door, and not knowing whether his visitor were friend or foe, but inclined to the latter suspicion, from their late attitude, laid his hand with deliberate alertness upon the steel rod which we have seen him use so liberally upon the head and body of Esark Hasserbrek; at the same he fixed his bright defiant hazel eyes questioningly upon those of the general.

The latter smiled, and said in a friendly tone:

"Oh, my young Hercules, do not imagine for an instant that I have any desire to brave that rod of steel. Let us be friends."

"Certainly, if you wish it," replied the artisan, captivated by the smile and kind expression beaming from the noble face of his visitor, and tossing aside the rod. "Still, I did not know that you wished to be a friend. You drew your sword on me out there."

"Not against you," interrupted the general, stepping familiarly into the dusty little shop, "but for you. To prevent you from committing a murder—for so the law would have called the death you evidently intended to inflict."

"I did not intend to kill the man—that is, I did not when I began to thrash him; but as it is, I am not sorry that you thrust your rapier between him and my rod. And now in what may I serve you, sir?"

"I have a little work for you to do, my friend, for which, when done, you shall be paid your own price," replied the general, taking off the silk from the package he held, and exposing a small metallic box. "My footman, who is a native and resident of Lyons, knowing I needed the services of a locksmith, recommended you to me as an excellent and discreet artisan."

Before the word "discreet," the general dwelt with

significant emphasis, at the same time gazing keenly in to the eyes of the locksmith.

"I consider my skill as a locksmith equal to that of any workman in Lyons," replied Lackville, with an air of modest merit. "There are doubtless many others as good, perhaps some who are better, though it is my ambition to be better than any."

"And your discretion?"

"My discretion? I do not understand your meaning, sir?"

"You can safely guard a secret?"

"I think so, sir; but let me say that I have no desire to be made the keeper of one."

"To do the work I desire, it is necessary that you shall say nothing of it to anyone. Shall I give you the work?"

"I have, indeed, more work than I can do already, sir. Your secret, whatever it may be, shall be safe with me; if I undertake the work it will be because I am already in your debt."

"Already in my debt?"

"Yes, sir, for keeping me from thrashing the life out of Esark Hasserbrek."

"Oh; and why were you so furious in that matter?"

"That is my secret, sir."

"Very good. Well, I wish you to make a key for me; it is a part of your trade, is it not?"

"A very important part."

"And to say nothing about the matter to anyone—not even to your wife."

"That I can safely promise, as I have no wife, sir."

"Oh, nor girl of your heart?"

"That is my secret," replied the artisan, his face flushing.

"It seems you have secrets in abundance and can keep them well," said the general, smiling, and opening the little box he held. "So I will trust you with one of mine. With great difficulty I have obtained an impression of a certain key of very peculiar shape. I wish you to make for me, as soon as you can, a key of the pattern which you see here." So saying, the general took from the little box a cake of wax and placed it in the hand of the artisan.

The artisan had hardly glanced at it, when he uttered a sharp cry of surprise mingled with anger. The impression on the cake of wax presented by the general was exactly the same as that which had filled the heart of the artisan with rage against Esark Hasserbrek; the same that he had crushed into a shapeless mass.

"Ha!" said he, with a fierce frown setting his white teeth firmly together in a paroxysm of wrath and suspicion. Then clashing his powerful fingers over the cake of wax, he crushed it as he had

crushed the other, into a shapeless mass; glaring anger, defiance, and suspicion at the stately, handsome man before him.

"Good Heaven!" cried the general, amazed. "Are you a madman? You have destroyed the impression!"

"Yes, and as I crushed that," exclaimed the artisan, tossing the wax furiously away and grasping a heavy hammer near him, "so will I crush anyone that dares to tamper with the key of the bed-chamber of Blanche de Moulaine."

The blood sprang hotly to the cheeks and forehead of the general, and he even thrust his hand menacingly into his bosom as if about to draw some hidden weapon. He was a tall and powerful man, not yet forty years of age, and it needed but a glance into his clear, steady blue eyes, and noble, resolute face, to see that he was as brave as a lion, as daring as an eagle.

But the last words of the artisan changed his indignation to surprise.

"There is a mistake here, my friend," he said, calmly.

"No doubt," replied the artisan, with a blaze of scorn and anger in his splendid hazel eyes, as he turned them full upon his visitor. "You of the rich and noble class often make the great mistake of imagining that we of the poor and lowly can be bought to serve your vices—your crimes. I repeat it—your crimes! for seeking to obtain a false key to the lock which guards the sanctity of a virtuous and innocent maiden's bed-chamber is a crime. Do you understand me, count, duke, marquis, prince, or whatever you may be? A crime worse than to murder a man."

"I admit that, my friend," said the general, calmly, and carefully studying the passion and character of the indignant young artisan; in fact, staring at his handsome features with a kind of wondering gaze, intense with its inquiry.

"Oh! you admit that, yet you come to me to make such false keys."

"Stop—I have never seen Blanche de Moulaine in all my life."

"Oh, of course not! Oh, of course not!" said Lackville, with something of a smile upon lips too noble to sneer.

"And I have never, until you spoke it, even heard the name of Blanche de Moulaine."

"Yet you had an impression of the key that unlocks her bed-chamber," said the artisan. "Ah, do not smile, sir; her bed-chamber is as sacred to me as the gates of Heaven. It was I who invented and made the lock that keeps secure the sleep of as

innocent and pure a maiden as ever lived. A lock that no thief, no burglar, no ruffian, gentle or plebeian, can pick, and one that cannot be broken open without making a great deal more noise than *rascales* like to make."

"And is there no lock like it in Lyons, my friend?"

"No, nor in the world! I designed it in secret! I made it in secret! I destroyed the design! By my life, sir, I could not now make another exactly like it. Of course I could make a key like the key that locks and unlocks it—with the original or an impression to guide me. But no lock like it can be made unless the lock be taken from where I fixed it—and that can be done only from within the apartment—and the lock then be taken to pieces."

"My friend, there must be a mistake."

"No. The impression that you showed me was taken from a key invented and made by me, sir—the key of the bed-chamber of *Blanche de Moulaine*. To that I am willing to swear," replied the artisan. "How did you obtain it? I suppose you are 'the man in the cloak.'"

"The man in the cloak! I do not understand you."

"Esark Hasserbrek said there was a man in a cloak prowling after *Blanche de Moulaine*."

"I swear to you, my friend, I know nothing of your *Blanche de Moulaine*. Do not be jealous of me, for as I live I love no one in the world, except that lady in the carriage, who is my wife."

"But why do you, like Esark Hasserbrek, come to me, or to anyone, with an impression of the key of the bed-chamber of *Blanche de Moulaine*? There is everything in the face of that man which declares he is a ruffian. I was not amazed to find that he had obtained an impression of the key—that is, not amazed at his villainy, for he is simply a demon. But your face is apparently the face of a man of honour and honourable thoughts."

"One moment, my friend," interrupted the general, with a grave, commanding gesture. "You say Hasserbrek desired a key of the same kind?"

"Yes—exactly. In fact, he admitted it was to be used upon the lock which guards the door of *Blanche de Moulaine*. Perhaps he did not mean to admit it—but he did."

"My friend, who occupies the room with the girl?"

"What is that to you, sir? since you have—"

"Patience! Is it not an old woman, deformed, ill-tempered, fierce, miserly, very ugly and squint-eyed?"

"Oh, it is plain that you know very well such a woman is the guardian or rather the mistress of *Blanche*—for you exactly describe that old tyrant, Mother Grimo—may Satan fly away with her."

"Good! I have no objections to that, my friend. You cannot detest Mother Grimo more than I do. But let me assure you that I did not know anything of your *Blanche*. It is against Mother Grimo that I desire to wage war. Come, as we both hate that old woman we must be allies."

With these words the general extended his right hand to the locksmith, smiling.

But the artisan did not accept the offer of alliance. On the contrary, he drew himself haughtily erect, and, with a cold dignity little to be expected from so young a man of so lowly a social rank, when so blandly approached by one of the great and rich, said:

"It is best that you should go your way while I go mine, sir. I said the same to Esark Hasserbrek. You are a stranger to me, and are of the class which despises mine. To be true friends we should be equals. If, indeed, there is a man in a cloak, as Hasserbrek hinted, who is a lover of *Blanche*, how do I know that you are not he?"

"Oh, but I swear to you—"

"Wait, sir. The fact that you came to me with an impression of a key which unlocks the door of the bed-chamber of *Blanche de Moulaine*—a key that she guards carefully, in fact she wears it in her girdle, attached to her neck by a chain—proves that you are capable of sly and treacherous work. I cannot imagine how two impressions of that key have been taken without the knowledge of *Blanche*—"

"You do not suspect that she might have permitted them to be taken?"

"What!" exclaimed the artisan, indignantly. "She tells me everything. But let us part," and with these words he turned away, opened a small door and strode into another room, closing the door after him, and leaving the general standing alone in the middle of the shop.

"I must know more of this young man," thought the general. "I must make him my friend. I would like to see this *Blanche de Moulaine* of whom he is so jealous—she may be another whom that old witch they call Mother Grimo intends to destroy. The friendship of this artisan and of his sweetheart may aid me in obtaining that which I desire. There

is much in his face, manner, and voice that draws my heart toward him."

Advancing to the narrow door through which the artisan had disappeared, the general rapped respectfully.

"Well?" said the locksmith, opening the door, and frowning, "must I be so impolite as to bid you be gone?"

"Come, my friend, do not be so rash," replied the general, smiling and extending a card. "There is my name and address. I desire to see you there at your convenience—"

"Ah! You are General Henri La Mothier?" exclaimed the artisan, as he read the name on the card, the name of one of the most gallant and noble soldiers of France, the name of a man whose reputation was brilliant for heroism, rectitude and generosity.

"True, and I have never heard the most bitter enemies of Henri La Mothier could say he caused a maiden to blush, or stooped to wrong anyone."

The general said this with a proud and noble air, and bowed to the artisan as to an equal.

The artisan was embarrassed. He saw that he had wronged the general in attributing evil purposes against *Blanche de Moulaine* to him. He pointed to a chair, and said politely:

"Pardon. Sit down, and if my friendship is worth anything to General La Mothier he may command it."

"Thanks. But my wife is doubtless growing impatient at my stay; you will call, that I may explain everything to you?"

"I will call, general," replied La Mothier, who was now regarding the general with a gaze full of interest.

In fact, so eager was his gaze that he seemed to be studying each feature of the general's face, one by one.

"You are more than a locksmith," remarked the general, glancing around the room.

The apartment was small, but larger than the shop with which it was connected. There was a bed in it, a few plain but neat and now articles of furniture, a carpet on the floor, several elegant engravings here and there on the walls, which were white as snow and evidently recently painted.

On a table in the centre of the room was a mass of sketches, designs and patterns, such as the "manufacturers" of silks gave as copies to the master weavers of Lyons, and the patterns were the work of two heads. Some of the patterns were traced in a delicate, light and graceful carelessness on one sheet, and repeated on another in a bold but exact style, with here and there an addition or an omission.

The pencils, ink and other articles of a pattern-designer were scattered about as if they had been just in use.

"You are more than a locksmith," said the general, smiling, and pointing at the table, "you are a designer; an artist."

The artisan bowed. He recognised by his respectful silence the presence of a man immeasurably his superior in social rank; by the proud glance of his dark eyes, and his erect air, he also declared his natural equality to any man in France.

The general examined more closely several of the designs, and evidently with the air of a man who was experienced in such matters.

"They are superb," he said, sincerely. "But not all your work, my friend."

Again the artisan bowed.

"They display the union of masculine and feminine invention and execution, *Blanche de Moulaine*?"

Again the artisan bowed.

"This is a haughty young genius," thought the general. "Certainly I must know more of him and his divine *Blanche*."

Here his eyes fell upon an object resting upon a beautiful ornamental bracket, the bracket affixed to the wall near the head of the neat and snow-white bed; over this object was a glass cover, to protect it from the dust.

This object, enshrined like the relic of a saint, was simply a lady's slipper, and though a little worn, it was plain that the foot to which it had once belonged was exquisite in shape and size.

From this the general glanced to the face of the artisan. It was suffused with a deep blush, and there was a quiver of embarrassment about his eyes.

"The slipper of *Blanche*?" said the general, smiling, and with graceful politeness and gallantry uncovering his head.

Had the general looked more closely at the slipper he would have seen that, fairy-like as it was, it contained another slipper, a tiny little affair, an infant's shoe, embroidered with pearls and beads of gold.

But to have discovered this fact the general must have leaned across the bed, and of such inquisitive impertinence he could not be guilty.

At it was the artisan evidently was chafed, for as he replied to the last question of the general, his eyes flashed angrily and his white brow reddened darkly.

"There are some things in this world to be considered beyond the conversation of casual acquaintances," he said, coldly. "I will do myself the honour to call on General Henri La Mothier at my earliest convenience, but shall ask no questions of anything I may see at his residence."

"I am justly rebuked for my idle curiosity," said the general, smiling, and turning to depart.

But as he did so those keen observant eyes of his, which nothing seemed to escape, fell upon an object suspended by a cord, near the foot of the bed. This he would not have perceived had not the curtain of the window by which it had been hidden, just then been flung aside by a puff of wind.

The object was one that made a shudder run through the veins of the general.

It was of iron. It was a branding-iron—the implement used in France to scar the naked flesh of galley slaves.

Why the general recognised this hideous implement at a glance, and why he shuddered as he recognised it, the reader shall be told hereafter. It suffices now to say that he shuddered violently as his eyes fell upon it, that his face became as pale as death; that drops of cold perspiration sprang out like great beads upon his brow; that his hands clasped, and that as he set his teeth hard something like a hiss and a groan and a malediction shot from his lips.

The iron, grim and rusty, and of a sullen, brownish-blackness, was visible but for an instant. The curtain which had flung aside immediately fluttered back over the branding-iron; and hung over it and its suspending cord like a shroud. The emotion of the general was momentary, and while it was upon him his face was not towards the artisan. When he turned an inquiring glance upon the locksmith the face of the general was calm and impressive, except in the questioning expression of his eyes.

Not so with the face of the artisan. It was flaming with an expression of pride combating shame. He too had seen that infamous implement. He knew, too, that the general had seen it.

"At night," he said, with extreme bitterness, and answering the unspoken question of the general, "I so arrange that curtain that it—that iron of infamy—and the slipper of *Blanche de Moulaine* are the two last objects my eyes fall upon as I extinguish my lamp, and the first my eyes rest on when I awake in the morning. The one is the slipper of the woman I love, and whom I yearn to make my wife. The other reminds me of my oath to some day use that iron as it was used upon me."

"Upon you!" exclaimed the general, startled.

"Oh, you said to me, let us be friends," cried the artisan, tearing with a fierce gesture at his throat, dragging his shirt from one of his shoulders, and revealing a mass of magnificent, symmetrical muscle clothed in skin naturally of dazzling whiteness, from which the bronze of wind, weather, sun, and exposure had nearly faded, "see this!"

He pointed to a red and disfiguring scar on his shoulder, the scar left there by the red-hot branding-iron, when cruel hands, at the command of the law, pressed it into his shrinking flesh more than three years, nearly four years before he thus displayed it to the general.

"See this! I was a *galérien*! Does Henri La Mothier, Count d'Ancres and general of the French army, now ask my friendship?"

Saying this, the artisan gazed sternly into the face of his visitor.

#### CHAPTER IV.

He is my hane! I cannot bear him!  
One heaven or earth can never hold us both!  
Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly  
Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:  
As if two suns should meet in one meridian,  
And strive in fiery combat for the passage. *Rome.*

THE general returned the half-fierce, half-scornful gaze of the artisan with calmness for an instant, and then said:

"Cover the scar, I beg you. Though you have been a *galérien*, I have no doubt you are an honest and honourable man, and were when that infamy was thrust upon you."

The artisan had expected that the display of his brand of infamy would cause the general to recoil from him in disgust and disdain. He would not have been angered had his visitor retired in haste and with expressions of scorn.

Had this been the conduct of General La Mothier, the artisan would have preserved silent contempt, for he had learned to despise the opinion of all who regarded signs of having been condemned as guilty full and positive proofs of guilt. But



when the man whose name was so highly honoured in France, spoke so kindly, and even advanced to aid him in covering his scar of disgrace, the locksmith, overcome by this noble and generous sympathy, sank down into a chair, and covering his face with his hands, wept bitterly.

"His tears come from his heart," thought the general. "His agony is bitter, for it has become a part of his soul."

There was a tap at the door which led into the shop, and instantly after the door was opened, and the pale, beautiful, sad face of the general's wife appeared; and this, too, before the artisan had time to draw his shirt over his shoulder.

"Oh, my husband, I am tired of waiting," began the countess.

But catching sight of the bare shoulder and peculiar scar upon it, she checked her speech with a cry of terror, at the same time placing her hands tightly upon her eyes.

"Oh, Heaven!" she said, starting back. "A *galérien*!"

"Say no more, Leola, and say not that again!" exclaimed the general, placing his right hand upon the naked shoulder of the artisan, and so covering the brand. "I am ready to wager half of my fortune that this young man is more worthy of a crown of gold than deservedly branded thus."

"As there is a Heaven above us," said the artisan, rising proudly, and lifting his hands to Heaven, "this brand was from the malice of an enemy, and not justly."

"With all my soul I believe you, my friend," replied the general, taking the arm of his wife. "Come as soon as you can to my hotel. I will tell you my story, and if you wish you can tell me yours. At least, we have the same enemies in two persons."

"In two?" asked the artisan, as he drew his shirt over his shoulder.

"In two, Mother Grimo and Esark Hasserbrek. But we will speak of these and other things at my hotel. You will come?"

"I will come."

"Good! We shall be friends and equals."

"Ah, the last is impossible; I have been a *galérien*," replied the artisan, in a mournful voice. "Right or wrong, innocent or guilty, I have been a *galérien*. Ah, madam," he added, turning his eyes sadly, though proudly, upon the countess, "having seen that brand of infamy, you were right in covering your eyes."

"My friend," said the lady, while her pale face flushed to the temples—and this roseate tinge made her charmingly beautiful—"it was the scar which caused my action, and not my dislike to you because of the scar. A dear friend of mine once had the same—"

"Take care, Leola," interrupted the general. "We need not speak of that now. Do you not see that the artisan already stares at you in wonder? Let us go."

"Has he made the key?" asked the lady, as her husband conducted her to the carriage.

"What! in so short a time?" replied the general, smiling. "Do you think locksmiths are magicians, to cry 'Presto,' and behold a key? We must give him time to do that."

With these words the general assisted his wife into the carriage, and seated himself by her side.

He said nothing at that time to her of what had passed between him and the artisan, and the carriage rolled away.

As it did so the general, yielding to a feeling of anxious curiosity, thrust his head from the carriage window on his side, and glanced first upwards towards the window from which the man with the red beard had spoken to the mob, and then turned his eyes towards the door of the artisan's shop.

The man with the red beard was again at the window, leaning on his elbows, and gazing down at the carriage. The glance between him and the latter was too great to allow the general to perceive the eyes of the man, but he knew he was gazing at the vehicle. When he saw that the face of the general was turned upwards, he instantly disappeared from the window.

Glancing thence at the door of the locksmith, the general saw that a man wearing a short cloak which reached scarcely to his knees, had halted, and was apparently reading the name and trade set forth by the sign over the door.

"Ah," thought the general, "it appears the artisan is to have another visitor—a man in a cloak too."

The carriage rolled on, turning an adjacent corner just as the person who had last attracted the attention of the general stepped into the shop of the artisan.

We will consider this person: A tall, lean, emaciated figure, surprisingly agile, restless and serpent-like at times, and then suddenly becoming as rigid, as motionless as a statue of stone. A head singularly long, and a face of indescribable no-

bility and power of change of features, eyes of common size, and peculiar lustre—neither dark nor blue, nor gray, nor yellow, nor green—but partaking of all colours.

When this man, whose hair was concealed by a wig of black hair, entered the shop of the locksmith, his face wore an expression of habitual stupidity. The instant he became convinced that the shop was vacant his features blazed with an expression of shrewdness, cunning and daring—the expression of a thief's face when about to commit a theft.

The eyes which had been heavy, dull and lead-coloured as he stepped in, became sharp, rapid, sparkling. The various hues we have mentioned as being visible in those organs seemed to concentrate themselves into circles, each hue clearly defined around the iris, like the circles painted upon a target—except that these eye-circles around the iris were separately, yellow, blue, green, and gray. These eyes flashed around the shop in an instant, evidently taking every object, every point, every angle at a sweep, and then concentrating all their power upon an enormous heap of keys of all sizes and shapes, which lay upon the end of the bench near the street door.

The door which led to the bedroom of the artisan was behind this man, but he had seen it. While his eyes were upon the heap of keys, his ears were, so to speak, nailed to that door. He did not know that anyone was near, but he suspected someone might be. But not the slightest sound came from that room, or the ears of this man, as keen as those of a hare, would have heard it.

His movements were as rapid and noiseless as the dancing of those minute insects called water-spiders. In an instant he held in the long, thin soft palm of his left hand a small, shallow box, which opened with a little click as his nimble thumb touched a spring near the lid.

The eyes of the man glimmered angrily as he heard this click, which was, indeed, a scarcely audible sound, the only sound that had been made within the shop since he slouched in with a step of feigned clownishness.

As his rather noisy entrance had not attracted the notice of anyone in the room, if anyone were in there, it was far from probable that the slight click of the small box-lid could. Yet this slight click evidently annoyed the man.

He turned his eyes towards the door and listened with a practised ear, every muscle of his tall, lean frame seeming to harden into stone.

After listening thus for a moment, he again fixed his gaze upon the heap of keys. Then his right hand flutted over and among these scraps of iron, steel, and brass. Touching, lifting, comparing and examining with a noiseless, rapid, nice eagerness that proved he was a master of locksmithing.

As he did this his eyes flashed to and fro from the pile of keys to something in the little box he held in his left hand. While thus engaged a cart, driven at great speed, went rolling by without, over the rough stone pavement of the street, making for a few seconds a tempest of noise.

The man seized this moment to dash his hand among the keys and scatter them more suitably for his search. The roar of the passing cart drowned utterly the clash and jingle of the keys.

So it did the noise made by a door creaking very slightly on its hinges. The door leading into the other room, which opened wide as the noisy cart thundered by, and revealed the form of the artisan entering. He had heard that slight click of the box-lid. After being left by the general he had remained standing near the closed door, thinking of the past. A gloomy subject of bitter reflection, which held him motionless, with his hands clasped before him, his chin upon his breast, his eyes upon the floor.

He was standing thus when the lean man entered the shop, and though he heard the noise of his entrance he did not heed it, nor move from his posture of overwhelming sadness. He imagined some stray, casual customer had come in, and as he was in no mood to see anyone, he resolved to remain where he was. Whoever had entered might call for him, but he would not answer, and the person would go away. There was little that was worth stealing in the dusty shop.

But soon after, and when thinking of the past, his ear caught that slight click, so profound at the moment was his silence.

Perhaps no other sound—but that would have been noticed by Robert Lackville. But in that click was something connected with his past life, with the unmerited infamy that had been thrust upon him.

The sound was wonderfully like the click of handcuffs, as he had heard them snapped upon the wrists of criminals, as he remembered how they had been snapped upon his own, when he was arrested for a crime that had been fastened upon him even to condemnation and execution.

As this sound fell upon his ear a shudder seized upon him. He raised his head, frowned, and listened, appalled. He almost fancied himself again a *galérien*, a criminal about to be arrested. His nervous system had been so excited by the events of the last hour, for scarcely an hour had elapsed since the entrance of Esark Hasserbrek, that every nerve of his powerful frame was painfully sensitive.

Without moving his feet he bent forward, stooped, and gazed through the key-hole of the door into his shop. He saw that some one was standing before his work bench, with his back towards him. From the position of this man the artisan could not see what he was doing. But there was one thing that struck his mind heavily at the moment. The intruder was "a man in a cloak."

Ordinarily this circumstance would scarcely have been noticed by the artisan, for many wore cloaks in Lyons; and especially was the style worn by this stranger in vogue.

But the remark, or rather insinuation, made by Esark Hasserbrek that Blanche had a lover who wore a cloak, pressed upon Lackville's heart. Not that he believed his beloved Blanche had encouraged the advances of any man in Lyons except himself, but it was very probable that her extraordinary beauty had attracted the eyes and desires of many a gay gallant.

He was not jealous nor distrustful of his betrothed, but he was of a disposition to hate furiously any other man who should dare to prowl after her; and the remarks of Esark Hasserbrek had led him to imagine some "man in a cloak" had been doing so.

It was not at all probable, even if Hasserbrek had spoken truly, that this intruder, though he wore a cloak, was the person meant; yet the heart of Robert Lackville sprang to his throat as he recognised that this man did wear one.

Whether the intruder was young or old, handsome or repulsive, a gallant or an artisan, he could not determine; and, eager to learn why he was there, the locksmith boldly opened the door just as the cart thundered by over the roughly-paved street.

In an instant the artisan understood the actions of the intruder.

The man in the cloak was evidently trying to find a key of a certain pattern to correspond with a shape he held in his left hand.

There could be no doubt of this, for as the artisan regarded him with breathless attention, he saw him select a small brass key from the mass and compare it with something he held in his other hand.

There was nothing in this fact as a mere act to arouse the suspicion of the locksmith. His customers often came for keys similar to some they had lost or mislaid; but, as has been said, the mind of the artisan was in a fever of suspicion, and, exerting his wonderful activity and panther-like strength, at a single bound he was within reach of the stranger, with the stranger's left wrist in his iron clutch.

The man in the cloak, to whom this leap and assault was like an avalanche, shrivelled and contracted like a green leaf thrown upon red-hot coals, for an instant, and then with an eel-like contortion of his arm freed his wrist from the grasp of the artisan, failing, however, to retain his clutch upon the little box, which, as he was seized, he had closed by a quick movement of his thumb.

The box fell upon the floor of the shop, and the foot of the artisan was upon it instantly. So quick were his eyes and his foot that even the lightning-like spring of the intruder to snatch it up with his right hand failed to be in time, and with a fierce cry of rage he confronted the locksmith as the latter regarded him stertily, standing as immovable as rock upon the coveted object.

In the struggle, which lasted scarcely a second, the slouched chapeau and black wig of the intruder had fallen from his long, melon-shaped head, revealing gray hair closely cropped and a pair of mutilated ears—ears once large and standing straight out from the head, but now so closely cut off that scarcely a vestige of the outer portion of those organs remained.

With cat-like quickness, so marked as one of the intruder's peculiarities, he snatched up the wig and hat and clapped them upon his head; and after that single cry of rage, a cry that was plainly involuntary, assumed a stolid, stupidly-amazed expression of countenance both laughable and piteous.

Possessing extraordinary power of changing the character and shape of his features, the stranger, but for his dress, could not have been believed to be the same man who had a moment before examined the scattered keys.

"This is very strange conduct," said the stranger, stupefied, and in very bad French, with a decided Dutch accent—the c's all turned into d's, and the d's into t's. "Giff me mine pox."

"Come," said the artisan, coolly, "you can speak better French than Dutch."

"Hear him! And I am Hans Von Felder, from Amsterdam!" exclaimed the stranger, lifting his hands in real or affected protest. "Of French I know very little, in fact I am ashamed of my French. I am Hans Von Felder, of Amsterdam. In Lyons to buy silks and velvets, I lose a little key. I need that key. I am a stranger in Lyons; I look for the shop of a locksmith. This I see. In I come—here I am—nobody else. I see many keys, I am in a hurry. I remember exactly the pattern of the key I lose. Very well; I mean no harm. I intended to leave money for the key, if no one comes in. I am an honest man. Suddenly—well, you know the rest. Now, if you please, let me have my little box."

The stranger said all this drawlingly, with a heavy, thick tongue, suited to the stolid, dull countenance he had assumed, and as he concluded stooped with a most natural air of truth, and tapped the foot of the artisan which covered the little box—tapped the foot gently and respectfully with his long forefinger, and gazed up most beseechingly into the artisan's face.

"My friend," said the latter, not stirring his foot, "I think you are a thief and a liar. You pretend to be a Hollander, when it is plain to me that you are a Gascon," and with these words, he dealt the stooping man a blow square upon the side of his head with the palm of his hand. He dealt this blow without the slightest warning, his hand flashed out like a dart.

The stranger was hurled headlong into a corner, and though he was upon his feet in an instant, for he was a man of strange agility, the box he had been so eager to secure was in the hands of the artisan.

"It is nothing," he said, still feigning stupidity and wonder. "You strike very hard."

He turned his face aside for an instant. To have saved his life he could not restrain a grimace of rage and hate. The grimace, unseen by the artisan, who was that moment trying to open the box, revealed the true character of the stranger. His grimace was that of a bitter-hearted, cunning, vindictive man, vowing to himself a sweeping, relentless revenge at some future time.

"Bah!" he exclaimed, to himself, "what if he does see what is in the box? Yet he has a keen eye and a shrewd lip. But, perhaps, after all he may suspect nothing."

"Ha!" cried the locksmith, suddenly. He had at last touched the spring that fastened the lid. The lid flew open, and in the box was a cake of wax!

The third cake of wax that had been thrust before the eyes of the artisan within an hour!

"Yes," said the stranger, "an impression of the key I lost."

"Oh, but if you lost it how could you have an impression of it?" demanded the artisan, whose eyes glowed like burnished bayonets.

"Having often lost keys—you see—I always have impressions taken of them."

"Very prudent," said the artisan, with an air that puzzled the stranger. "And you want me to believe that?"

"Believe it, of course! It is true. I swear it."

"Do you know that I think you are the man in the cloak?"

Here the artisan gently lifted the steel rod, and advanced carelessly towards the stranger.

"The man in the cloak! True, I wear a cloak," replied the stranger, bewildered, but with a sudden glare in his eyes that belied the stupidity he had assumed.

"Yes, you are the man in the cloak, no doubt. My friend, what do you wish to do with a key like this impression?"

"To do with it? To unlock my chest."

"Oh! And your chest has a lock which such a key will fit?"

"Certainly. What will you charge to make one immediately?"

"I cannot—or rather I will not."

"As you please. I can obtain the services of some other locksmith," said the stranger, briskly, too briskly for one who feigned unusual stupidity. "So give me the box."

"You shall have your box," replied the artisan, taking the cake of wax from it. So saying, he tossed the box to the stranger.

"But give me the wax."

"True, the wax belongs to you," said the artisan, crushing the cake in his hand, and then tossing it to the stranger.

"You have destroyed the impression," remarked the latter, in perfect French, while his face flamed with uncontrollable rage.

"Yes, and if you again dare attempt to tamper with the key from which that impression was taken, I will crush your head as I crushed the wax. You are an impostor. At some time during your life

your ears were cut off because you were a thief. The cutting off your ears did not make you less a thief. Your whole head should have been cut off," cried the artisan, suddenly grasping the stranger by the throat with his left hand. "What do you desire with a key that can be used upon but one lock in the world?"

Then away the man to and fro, and brandishing over him the steel rod that had battered Esark Haesbrek, the artisan continued:

"Know that I made that lock—made but one—made it for Blanche de Moulaine! Now, crop-eared dog of a thief, what did you desire to do with a key like that?"

The stranger had made no effort to evade the assault of the artisan, nor to escape from the powerful grasp which was half-choking him: on the contrary he offered no resistance whatever, and to all appearance there was scarcely more life and combativeness in him than in a dead snake, except that he kept his feet.

But suddenly, and just as he comprehended the declaration of the artisan, and saw the steel rod about to fall upon him, his muscles sprang into action—everyone becoming hard and elastic. In an instant a miraculous contortion of his lean frame freed his neck and collar from the clutch of the artisan. In another the steel rod whistled harmlessly over his head. In another his right hand darted from his own breast against that of the locksmith, a flash and gleam of a dagger accompanying the movement.

With a sharp cry of pain and surprise the artisan sprang backward, dropping the steel rod and clapping both hands to a wound in his breast.

The stranger uttered a short, hoarse, mocking laugh, and with the dagger raised sprang upon him to deal a blow that should be fatal.

The artisan caught the stab in the muscles of his left arm, the blade of the weapon striking between the wrist and the elbow and passing through, so as to show the point, the blow being dealt with such tremendous force that the hilt of the dagger, striking against the arm of the artisan, bent it towards him and forced the point into his left breast. Had not the thickness of the artisan's arm interposed, the dagger would inevitably have pierced his heart.

As this murderous thrust was made, the artisan let fly his right hand with a force and skill that hurled the stranger clear across the shop and against the workbench. But with the agility of an ape the stranger recovered his feet and bounded over the workbench, through the open window, and out into the street.

"In the act of leaping he exclaimed:

"You are a dead man! You have it!"

(To be continued.)

#### HIBERNATION.

THIS remarkable habit of adaptation possessed by some animals has been from time immemorial a kind of mystery, and notwithstanding all that has been written upon this subject, there still appears but little really known or understood about it.

Many animals sleep soundly, and may be regarded as dormant, but not torpid; but animals in a perfect state of hibernation are not only dormant, but torpid, a state in which the animal's temperature is much lowered; the respiration and circulation, together with the digestive functions, nearly cease, and the organs of secretion and excretion are inactive—in this condition but little air is required. This is clearly shown by the experiments published by Dr. Marshall Hall. The respiration continues low, the temperature falls, and the animal can bear, for a short period, the abstraction of atmospheric air.

This calls strongly to mind the fact that the rough labouring population, who are possessed of enormous strength, which enables them to continue the most laborious work in mines and dismal places, sleep, when nature requires rest, the apparent sleep of death, in the most foul and stifling atmosphere, and wake up with the strength of refreshed giants. Whatever may be said or thought upon the necessity of well-ventilated and airy sleeping rooms, the fact of a large mass of our species living and doing well in a totally different state, remains yet to be explained.

Many generations of these powerful and robust men have existed without any apparent diminution in strength or courage, like bears and lions, sleeping in caves and loathsome places. Contrast their state with that of the highly-favoured of our race, whose sleeping apartments possess every comfort, have all the requirements necessary to a sanitary condition that an enlightened nation can imagine, and yet he sleeps not, or if he do, it is so imperfectly that all the hours required to rest an exhausted frame are either wakeful or dreaming.

It would be esteemed by many of our species as a great boon could they sleep quietly through the cold and gloomy season of the year without having to encounter a few difficulties which would inevitably present themselves to their so doing. As a preparatory measure they would have to undergo the process during the summer and autumn months of laying up a store of fat, to which those who have no desire to become obese would object.

Again, they would have to be prepared to settle all accounts previous to retiring to their winter quarters; and much difficulty would be experienced in keeping out of the reach of those who appear "wide awake under every circumstance." Consequently many endless disadvantages would be attendant upon a torpid state of being, had such been allotted to our kind.

But to creatures that could not exist in an active state during the cold season it is of immense importance that they are endowed with the habit of fasting and sleeping during that time. The different animals that are able to live for lengthened periods without food are worthy of remark.

Among mammals we have bats, hedgehogs, bears, marmots, squirrels, dormice, and many others, which possess that power, although varying much in the time, the duration of which depends upon the temperature. No kind of bird, however, hibernates, or can live in a torpid state.

Some species wake up occasionally on warm sunny days in hard winter and take a meal, and again retire to "sleep the happy hours away." Squirrels and dormice frequently do so, as also some of the species of bats; the warmth of the day causing a few insects to put in an appearance, upon which the bats feed for an hour or two, and again quietly hide up before the temperature lowers sufficiently to produce numbness. These, like the dormice and other rodents, when in a torpid state, are, to the touch, if taken into the hand, perfectly cold, and are quite motionless, and to all appearance dead; but upon the temperature being raised, they become in a short time lively and active. Were it necessary to enlarge by additional facts to show that in a large number of cases temperature is sufficient to account for the lethargy, a better case cannot be selected than in the common dormouse; nothing more is required to rouse this little pet from his slumber, than to increase the warmth of the apartment; the animal will without injury wake up and feed as often during the winter as is thought proper; endless experiments have been successfully tried to prove this.

Let it, however, be borne in mind that these animals to be experimented upon must be perfectly healthy and in the excessively fat state natural to them before the winter sets in, otherwise they will not live during the cold weather. Another important matter is not to change the temperature too rapidly, for few animals can live or continue in good health if the temperature is suddenly and frequently changed by many degrees.

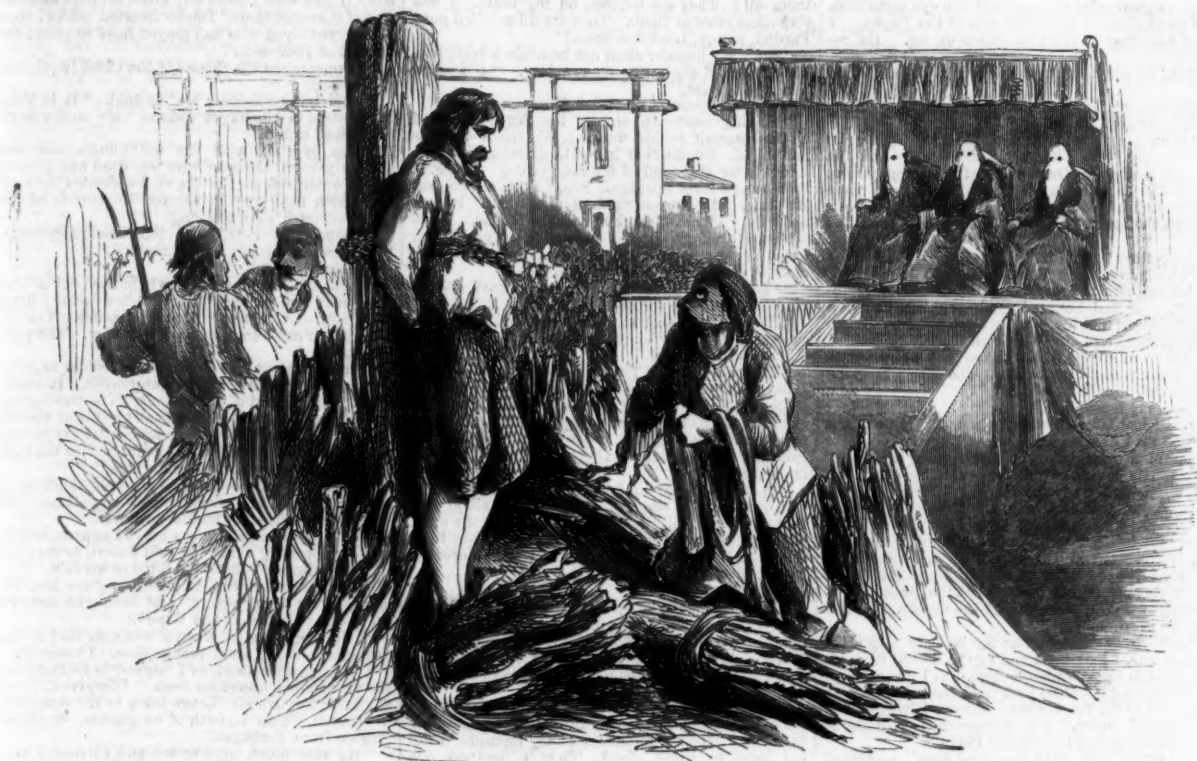
There can be no question that the animals that hibernate are always excessively fat previous to retiring to sleep, for if otherwise they would die from the effects of the cold and exhaustion; it is equally certain that during the period of hibernation this store of fat is being consumed by absorption, for at the termination of the winter those animals that have slept all the cold season wake up quite thin and hungry.

It is a curious fact that bears never hibernate in captivity, at least no instance has been on record to the knowledge of the writer, although in Europe the brown bear is known to do so in a state of nature.

**MORTALITY OF WAR.**—In the Crimean War the French lost 95,615 men. Of these 10,240 were killed in battle, and about the same number died of their wounds, leaving 75,000 to perish of sickness and disease. The mortality by wounds was 34 per cent., by maladies 121 per cent. In the English army the mortality by wounds was 23 per cent., by sickness 93. It is estimated that in the Crimea the Russians lost 30,000 men in killed, and that 600,000 perished of sickness and want.

**FRIDAY.**—We seem led to the conclusion that the reverence paid to Friday in Russia is owing to the fact that the days of the week were known before the introduction of Christianity. It is possible indeed that during the century between the coming of Rurik and the conversion of St. Vladimir, the Germans, who even then had certain commercial relations with Novgorod, may have introduced the notation by weeks, and even the names of the days. But it is conceivable that the week may have been in use in both Russia and Germany long prior to the introduction of Christianity. Is there any proof that it was not brought to the northern nations direct from the East, without passing through Greece and Rome?





[THE BROTHERS' LAST MEETING.]

## STONIO.

## CHAPTER XX.

SILVA, unable to speak, petrified, as it were, closed his eyes and shuddered.

It flashed through his mind that he was to face the woman whom he had robbed of her child. That the astronomer would give him up to the vengeance of that woman.

The vengeance of the weak is horrible to the strong, when the weak has fettered the strong.

What vengeance would this woman inflict when she should learn two great facts?

The fact that her babe was strangled? and the fact that the man who strangled it was at her mercy?

Her mercy! The mercy of a woman bold, resolute, passionate, pertinacious in the hope of twenty-five years that her child still lived, on learning the first fact: that her babe was strangled by the man who robbed her of it—the man in her power! What mercy to be hoped for from her?

None.

What vengeance?

The astronomer continued:

"The story of this miserable mother deeply interested me, and I engaged her as one of my household. I shall have a sad story to tell her: or shall I shift the burden of telling it to you?"

"To me!" cried Silva, almost with a shriek. "For the love of God, my lord duke, do not tell her while I am alive! Do not let her put her hands on me!—no, not even her eyes! Oh, remember your promise! Your grace promised not to torture me."

"I shall keep my promise."

"Ah! thank Heaven for that."

"Dare you thank Heaven for anything, impious, cruel, soulless ruffian? I promised that I would not torture you. I will not. I have learned a great secret. It was not the corpse of the infant marquis that you showed to us in the torture chamber. The infant marquis escaped—escaped with the three old men, Pietro, Santez, and Carlos. He may still be living. I intend to seek for him. If he is alive I shall find him. But that is nothing to you, who are about to die."

The astronomer said this so calmly that Silva shuddered. The words, "But that is nothing to you, who are about to die!" were spoken as one might say, "Come, I am hungry, and dinner is ready. Let us eat."

"You remember," continued the astronomer, coldly at first, but with eyes that flashed fire as he proceeded, "that I told you I witnessed the death

of my brother Gomez, Conde de Espinoza. Why? Why did I not, after escaping the same death by breaking from my dungeon, fly at once from Lisbon? Why remain to witness, in disguise, the terrible death of my brother? Simply this: that his heart, even amid his tortures, should rejoice in the knowledge that his beloved brother Stephano had escaped, and lived to avenge him.

"I made my escape only a few hours before the time appointed for our execution. We were to be burnt at the same time and place. The two stakes were already prepared in the great square, not ten feet apart.

"Our enemies intended that the two Villotas should each witness the dreadful torment of the other. We were to be burnt to death so near to each other that every sign of pain in the face of each should be seen by the other.

"I knew that my escape would not be told to my brother Gomez. The torturers would recoil from pouring upon his bruised heart the balm such intelligence would have been to him.

"I resolved that he should know it, even though to inform him I should be forced to witness his torture—if not with my eyes, with my ears. If I closed my eyes, or turned them away, I should hear his groans, his shrieks of pain—for Gomez, delicate and sensitive as a child, was exceedingly susceptible to physical pain. They always gave him too much pain in the torture chamber. At the first turn of the rack he always fainted. But I knew he could not faint amid flame. Fire stimulates. In flame he would suffer indescribably. It would be dreadful to witness his agony; but to let him know that I, his beloved brother, lived, it was necessary that I should stand near enough to him to whisper to him, or to make some gesture of individuality which he might see and recognise.

"I knew, too, that as I had escaped, the precautions against the escape of my brother would be doubled. Still, I resolved to deceive the guards, even if there were a thousand of them. You have acted as a fagot guard, Ritzburg."

The astronomer spoke this last sentence so suddenly, and with such terrible emphasis, that Silva uttered a howl, as a dog might when suddenly struck.

"You were one of those who placed the bundles of fagots around the stake at which my brother was burned."

"Oh, my lord duke!" groaned the wretch.

"You desired to carry your ingratitude—desired to do evil to your benefactor, even to heaping around the stake at which he was to be burned—the fagots by which he was to be wrapped in flame.

"While in my dungeon I heard you bargaining with one of those servants of the tribunal whose office it was to place the fagots, to fire them, to keep them heaped up around the man at the stake, to increase or to decrease the heat at command of the chief torturer, to end the torture with increased heat, or to draw it out lingeringly. I heard you bargaining with one of these fagot guards. You longed for the pleasure of witnessing, of producing the infernal torture of your two benefactors—of those who had saved your life and been betrayed—no, not betrayed, for they were innocent, but condemned to death by your perjury. Accursed wretch!"

The astronomer hurled this epithet at Silva with concentrated passion, in which was nothing brutal, but something like the passion of righteous wrath and scorn.

"He has promised not to torture me," thought Silva, "but his words, his eyes, his gestures are like flame. He burns me to the bone with his terrible gaze! Mercy, Lord Duke Stephano! Oh that the stone-cutter had not saved me for this!"

He spoke this last aloud, and the astronomer caught at two words—"the stone-cutter."

"The stone-cutter? Ah, perhaps you and he are yet to meet. You may not die to-day."

"The stone-cutter?" thought Silva. "What is the stone-cutter to me? True, I tried to have him captured. Oh, a thousand times rather would I be at the mercy of the stone-cutter, than here at the mercy of Duke Stephano!"

"To return to the past," said the astronomer.

"I escaped, and I resolved to be one of the fagot guards at the execution of my brother. I will pause to tell how I managed the matter. As you know, the fagot guards wear masks of black leather on such occasions, to shield their faces from the heat of the flames, and thick, long gauntlets of stout leather, reaching almost to the shoulder, to protect them from the heat of the fiery embers which they toss into the flames with their long fagot spears, or with their hands.

"I had little time to work in, after my escape, in order to succeed in my purpose. But I did succeed. I was forced to take a human life to succeed—that is, if I may call those who are zealous servants of your torturers human," added the astronomer.

"Your bargaining with the fagot guard at the door of my cell had produced a plan in my mind. It was far from daylight when I escaped, half naked, from my dungeon, and thence from the prison. While escaping I found the long black robe of an inquisitor. Wrapped in this, I made my way speedily to the house of Dominique Petz. Do you know the man?"

"He was one of the fagot guards," replied Silva, forced to answer by the power of the eye upon him. "He lived alone on the other side of the Tagus. I asked him first to yield his place to me. He refused."

"Yes, he refused, for he loved to torture. Go on."

"He refused. He was at the execution."

"He was not. But go on."

"He was, my lord, for I spoke to him. True, he did not reply, but I knew his dress well, and the hump on his back. On the day after the execution, as he did not appear at the prison, search was made for him, and he was found in his bed, dead, stabbed through the heart. There was a mystery about his death."

"A mystery! Tell it."

"It has never been discovered who killed him, and his uniform and mask and gauntlets had disappeared. He had hoarded much gold, for he was a terrible miser, and his gold was gone. All said some sharp brigand had done the work."

"All were wrong," continued the astronomer. "He was not at the execution. The man you spoke to, thinking him Petz, was I."

"You, my lord duke!"

"I hurried to his lonely house. It was just daylight as I effected a noiseless entrance."

"The man was asleep. His uniform at the side of his bed. His hoards of gold in a sack hugged to his breast. His gold was his wife, his children, his god. There was no good in the man. He was a monster of cruelty. He was one of those who had aided to torture my brother on the rack. He was one who even in his sleep still tortured, for as I raised his own dagger over his throat I heard him mutter:

"'Take the fagots back. Let the proud Villotas suffer for hours—especially the Conde. That's him—he is so virtuous.'"

"Lorenzo Ritzburg, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, I look back and say to myself it was a good deed to slay Dominique Petz. If I live twenty-five years longer I shall look back and say it was a good deed to rid the world of Lorenzo Ritzburg!"

"Pardon! mercy! You torture me! Kill me at once, as you killed Dominique Petz!"

"He never knew what was over him," continued the astronomer, in a hollow voice, as he recalled the scene. "He never moved until his own dagger was plunged to the hilt into his heart."

"Ugh! and then?" gasped Silva.

"He awoke with a screech which I smothered with my left-hand, the right gripping the dagger-hilt and holding him down. He did not live long, not a minute, but he lived long enough to recognise me, and to hear me say in his white, villainous face:

"'You know me! I am Stephano Villota, Duke of Villota.'"

"I removed my hand from his mouth. He stared at me—gasped 'He has escaped to kill me!' and with a shudder died."

"Oh!" cried Silva. "It was all over with him very soon. My lord, favour me as you favoured Dominique Petz."

"Ritzburg," said the astronomer, with a face of awful sternness, "do you remember the last words my brother spoke to you?"

Silva said not a word. He was trying to recall the last words ever addressed to him by the unfortunate Conde.

"If you have forgotten them, I have not," said the astronomer. "Think. The last words the noble Conde de Espinoza addressed directly to you, were immediately after you had finished giving your false, perjured evidence against him before the Inquisition."

"Oh, I think the noble Conde said to me, 'Ritzburg, on your soul, is not all that you have said a falsehood?'"

"There was more. You replied angrily, 'If there is a liar and a sorcerer here it is Gomez Villota, Conde de Espinoza!' You said that. You dared say that."

"Oh, my lord duke!"

"Think. When you had uttered that vile insult worthy only of yourself, wretch that you ever have been, what said the noble Conde?"

Silva remembered, and shuddered. But he remained silent.

"You dare not repeat the words of the Conde," said the astronomer. "They are resounding in your terrified soul, but you dare not repeat them. I will repeat them for you, Lorenzo Ritzburg."

"Said the Conde, raising one hand towards heaven and pointing with the other at you:

"'I shall never open my lips to you again, Ritzburg. Be accursed! Live for years a trembling coward whenever you think of me. Think of me always, awake and asleep. Let my spectre haunt you. You are accursed. The day shall come when you will beg for death, and death shall not be given to you. Traitor! perjuror! the flames to which your lies have consigned me shall be as the kisses of maidens to the torments that await you on earth and in the future world!'"

"Word for word!" groaned Silva. "I remember them all! They are written on my brain. I had forgotten some of them. They are all recalled now. Pardon, mercy, Lord Stephano!"

"No. My brother shall not be made a false prophet," replied the astronomer, coldly. "Let us return to the past."

"Accursed past!" muttered Silva.

"Having made an end of the fagot guard, I clothed myself in his uniform, his mask and his gauntlets. I concealed his gold about my person. I took it as the spoil of my dead enemy. I needed it to escape from Portugal. See, I became a robber. But that did not press upon my soul then. It does not now. I hurried back across the Tagus. I presented myself boldly among the fagot guards for duty. It was you who, believing me to be Petz, the chief of the fagot guards, said to me:

"'See; after all I found one who gave me his place and uniform for to-day, old hunchback!'"

"By my dress and the false hunch I had taken care to place between my shoulders, you and all others were deceived."

"I made no reply. The man I represented seldom spoke. It was his custom to give his orders by gestures. Even when forced to address his superiors he used whispers, hoarse, easily imitated whispers. He had lost his voice. For years he had not spoken aloud. Do you know how he lost his voice?"

"It was said, my lord duke, that he always filed off a little of the edges of all gold and silver coin that came into his hands, and retaining the dust, the filings, passed off the lessened coins for their full value. The filings he sold, and thus increased his hoards."

"Very true. Go on."

"One day, while filing away, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, and accidentally drew into his throat and lungs much of the fine dust of the filings. After that he was never able to speak aloud again. Whenever he tried to speak aloud he coughed up blood."

"True. He sold his voice for gold-dust. He was known as 'the man who swallowed gold and lost his voice.' His misfortune was my fortune. I did not have to speak aloud. Thus I escaped one great chance of detection. The hump disguised my shape, the mask hid my face, the gauntlets concealed the whiteness, size, and softness of my hands, the uniform hid my identity."

"I trembled, however, when a fagot guard in a mask clapped me on my back, and said:

"'Ho, old hunchback, you have two new assistants to-day!'"

"I trembled for two reasons: First, because his hand had struck my false hump. That was a trembling from fear of detection. Secondly, I trembled because I recognised the voice of the masked fagot guard. It was Diego Alva! I trembled with rage! He, too, wished to be one of the torturers of the Villotas!"

"Fortunately he turned away, his attention being called elsewhere."

"I said I had resolved that my brother should not die in ignorance of my escape. Before I left the room in which I had slain Dominique Petz I had made another resolution. This—that he should not die by fire."

"But he did!" cried Silva. "Oh, I am sorry that he did! Mercy!"

"Hypocrite! He did not. He died by poison!"

"By poison?"

"Yes. Listen, that you may know how the noble Conde escaped the torture which had been decreed. In the room of Petz were several vials labelled—Poison."

"Oh, he used to dabble in them," said Silva. "He prepared the poisons often used by the Inquisition."

"Yes, and among them some which would for ever rob the brain of reason."

"But I used none of the poisons of Petz. Seeing them only gave me an idea. On my way to the prison I stopped at the house of Vegas."

"The chemist?"

"Yes, and obtained from him certain ingredients with which I made a pill. Vegas did not recognise me. He thought I was Petz. My dress, my false hump, my hoarse whispers deceived him. Besides, Petz had often bought his drugs of Vegas, who was also an apothecary."

"The unfortunate Conde was, at length led from his dungeon, and bound to the stake with chains. His arms and legs were not bound. Chains around his middle alone held him to the stake—a stout beam of green wood, firmly implanted in the ground. His arms and legs were left free, that his useless struggles in the flames should be all the more a mockery of his agony."

"I saw my brother cast his eyes upon the stake that had no victim. He was looking for me. He knew that it had been decreed we were to be burnt before each other's eyes."

"I approached the seat of the chief inquisitor. It was, in fact, a throne, raising him high above the

heads of the great multitude gathered from all Lisbon. There were nobles and great soldiers and officers of the court there. Tender-hearted nobles! How I scorn you—you who had played false to two of the noblest of your order!"

"I approached the throne of the Chief Inquisitor, and bowed."

"'Bid him come near us,' he said. 'It is Petz, the captain of the fagot guards. He comes to receive final orders.'"

"Step by step, with the well-known slow and solemn pace of the man who was dead and ghastly on the other side of the Tagus, I ascended the scaffold which held up the thrones—the thrones of one more powerful than the king."

"Dominique Petz," said the Chief Inquisitor, 'the accursed must be slowly roasted.'"

"I bowed."

"The evil one must be slowly burned out of him. The evil one, though living in fire below, hates the fire of earth. Let the accursed suffer. Yet the Inquisition has been inclined to mercy. The powder-bag!"

"An attendant gave me a long, slender sack, of the size of my wrist, full of gunpowder. It looked like a long red and black serpent. The powder bag was wrapped around the chest and ankle of the victim, so that when the flames touched it the powder should explode, and blow his heart out or his head off, and so at once end his sufferings."

Silva shuddered violently. He was thinking of the past. He had remembered something. He hoped the astronomer had forgotten it.

"With joy and grief in my heart I approached my brother. Secretly I made myself known to him, and then a rapturous delight sparkled in his face."

"It is because the Inquisition gives him the mercy of the powder-bag!" said those who saw that joy in the pale face of the Conde."

"Brother," I said, when I was sure that he had recognised me, 'I shall avenge thee. I swear it.'"

"No," he whispered, as I feigned to be fastening the powder-bag about his neck. 'I forgive all, even as Christ forgave all. Leave them to the vengeance of Heaven. Take no oath of vengeance, Stephano. Hasten from Portugal.'"

"He said much more to me, and I listened as if my life depended on his words. Finally I said:

"'Brother, they intend a slow and lingering death.'"

"I felt his delicate frame quiver, and a spasm of agony, the agony of physical fear, convulsed his face."

"It cannot be worse than what He suffered on the Cross!" he said, shuddering."

"No," I replied, 'but His agony was shortened by the thrust of a spear. I have a spear-thrust for thee, dear brother. As I press against thee, feigning to fasten this powder-bag, slip thy hand into my bosom, on the left side—so. Thou feelest a small package? Good! It contains a single pill. Haste! Thou hast the pill in thy hand? Good! Now hold it in thy hand concealed. It is the spear-thrust I have for thee, Gomez. When thou wishest to see no more of earth, put that pill into thy mouth, and crush it between thy teeth. The thunderbolt does its work not more quickly than this poisoned pellet. No pain, not even a spasm. Instantaneous death, and painless, dear Gomez. The pill is the spear-thrust thy brother giveth thee. Use it. It is not suicide. Would to God, Gomez, I might press my lips to thine, as we used in our childhood, so that my kiss could rest once more on thy cheek, dear brother. But I may kiss thy hand secretly, as I pretend to be busied here. Slide thy hand under my mask—so! There, I have thrice pressed my lips to thy dear hand, poor brother. Farewell. God receive thy soul!'"

## CHAPTER XXI.

The voice of the astronomer had gradually broken as he proceeded in his story. As he spoke the last word of the preceding chapter, a great sob of anguish burst from his lips, and turning his face from Silva he wept bitterly, leaning his august, majestic face upon both hands.

The fettered ruffian, whose black treachery and perjury had caused this transport of grief, felt a chill like the chill of death creeping over him.

He could do nothing but tremble and stare. Yes, he could mutter, and his incoherent mutterings framed but one phrase:

"Accursed past!"

The astronomer quickly recovered from a weakness so rare with him. He soon again turned his face towards Silva, and the fire of returning wrath quickly dried the tears which quivered upon his eyelids.

"Yes," he continued, "I three times pressed my lips to my brother's hand. I bade him farewell, and left him."

"Fire the fagots!" cried the Chief Inquisitor, impatient at the delay."

"I seized a torch held by one of the fagot guards, and gazed for an instant at my brother. I feared



he might scruple to use that which I had given him.

"He fixed his sad eyes upon mine. My face was hidden by my mask, but he doubtless knew what agony was writhing upon my features.

"He began to speak. He said:

"I forgive all my enemies. If I have a friend living, let him leave vengeance for my death to Heaven. As I am about to die, much of the future is clear to me. O, Lisbon, thou art to be punished. There is to be a rocking and heaving of thy solid earth—a crumbling and an overthrow of all thy greatness! All these great palaces, these lofty churches, these strong prisons, are to be thrown down in an instant. Five and twenty times shall the earth revolve about the sun, and then—woe, woe, woe to Lisbon! Then shall the innocent blood be avenged! The young, the old, the weak, the strong, the noble, and the lowly shall perish amid the crash of crumbling Lisbon! The sea shall swell and sweep over her—the flames shall devour her! The day shall be made night, and the hand of violence shall be upon the dead and the dying! Woe, woe, woe to thee, miserable Lisbon! When all is fairest and brightest in thy bosom—when thy old men and maidens, and all that have life in thee, are decking thy altars with garlands, and thy songs of joy and gladness are rising from thy holy places, in an instant the earth shall reject thee, the sea shall sweep over thee, and the flames shall devour thee! Then shall I, and all who have suffered, be avenged. Await that day of vengeance, Stephano, for it is revealed to me that thou shalt escape the wrath of those who destroy me!"

"He blasphemes! he blasphemes!" shouted the chief inquisitor; and all those about him took up the cry. It rose from thrice ten thousand throats, a mighty howl of rage and scorn. "He blasphemes!" "They lied, Lorenzo Ritsburg! He prophesied! The vengeance is near. Lisbon is doomed. On the first day of the coming month—on the first day of November, five-and-twenty times the earth will have revolved about the sun since Gomez Villota spoke the prophecy. At the very hour of the morning when he uttered it shall the prophecy be fulfilled, he declared. Science, as well as faith, bids me believe it! Then woe indeed to Lisbon, and all who live in her. She is doomed!"

"But of my brother let me speak. I saw flash over his inspired face a resolution not to use the 'spear-thrust' I had given him. I saw by the fire of his eye, the compression of his lips, the glow of his face, that he had resolved to brave the flaming fagots.

"There was a cloud over the face of the god-like sun. It was as if Heaven had draped its greatest luminary in crape. Storm clouds had been rolling up from the mountains towards Cintra since dawn. The people were impatient. They feared the gay sport would be spoiled by rain and wind and storm.

"I dared delay no longer. I touched my torch to the fagots, and all the fagot guards did the same.

"In a moment a circle of fire was around the stake, and smoke began to roll up.

"It is fired!" roared the people. And a shout of applause swept like rolling thunder over the densely thronged square.

"At the same instant the dark heavens thundered, and the boom of that thunder was a mockery of the thunder of superstition and savage joy.

"At that moment I caught the eyes of my brother fixed intently upon me, and it was then that you said to me—

"Ah, he has not forgotten it!" gasped Silva, as the eye of the astronomer flashed fearfully. "He has forgotten nothing."

And a quiver of speechless terror seized upon him.

"You, thinking me Dominique Pets, grasped my arm, and said to me:

"There is no gunpowder in the bag you wound around his neck. We have played a trick—Don Alva and I—a trick you will pardon, old hump-back!"

"What trick?" I asked, hoarsely, still studying the eye of my brother.

"Oh, we heard that the Inquisition, at the desire of our good lord, Count Pedro, had decreed to the Conde the mercy of the powder-bag, so we stole away that which had been prepared, and substituted for it another, exactly like it, filled with sand."

"With sand?"

"Yes. Is it not clever? The Conde will not have his pains shortened, unless the sand of the Tagus can explode like gunpowder!"

"Mercy, my lord duke!"

"Oh, wretch! Even at the stake you sought to add to the tortures of the noble Conde," replied the astronomer, with awful austerity. "I could not restrain my rage. I turned upon you and struck you down with my fagot-spear. My act was nothing unusual in him whom I personated. Dominique Pets had often knocked down his awkward assis-

taunts. You regained your feet, and scrambled out of his reach, saying:

"I will remember that blow, vile Dominique!"

"Then I gazed again upon my brother. He raised his hand, closed, and I knew the poisoned pill was in it. The heat had not yet touched him, but the fagots were fast kindling around him. He fixed his eyes upon mine, and in a loud voice, clear and sonorous, cried out:

"The will of God be done!"

"He opened his hand, and I saw the poisoned pill fall far from him, among blazing fagots.

"He had rejected the 'spear-thrust'."

"Again he spoke, saying:

"His holy hands were nailed to the cross. He could not avoid that which the pitying Roman gave. My hands are free. I reject."

"Ah, it was well that I had prepared for this martyr-heroism of my noble brother," continued the astronomer, as his eyes sparkled triumphantly.

"I rushed to a bundle of fagots from which issued a dense volume of pitchy smoke. The smoke almost stifled me, but it concealed my actions. With a firm, quick hand, I did my work in a moment. At the shop of Vegalias, the chemist, I had prepared a poisonous salve, an ointment of most deadly nature. The smallest atom of that salve, introduced under the skin, instantly combines with the blood. A deep lethargy immediately follows—a lethargy which annihilates all sensation, and speedily ends in death.

"The head of the fagot spear is a trident; the centre spike of mine I had that morning ground to the keenness of a needle. I anointed this spike of the trident with the salve, and sprang forth from the smoke.

"The heat had begun to scorch the feet and legs of my naked brother, though as yet he had given no sign of pain. But the snow-white skin of those tender limbs had become as red as scarlet. He was but a youth, not twenty-two years of age, and I knew his strength to endure pain was that of a child.

"But his face was firm and heroic—nay, he smiled as I reappeared from the smoke; smiled forgiveness upon his enemies, and love upon me.

"There was no time to be lost. In a few moments more the agony would begin.

"With a firm hand I grasped the long handle of the fagot spear. The smoke was rolling about his feet and knees, but I could see them—firmly planted yet, as rock, in his resolve to endure.

"Unseen by anyone I thrust the poisoned spike sharply into the foot of the noble Conde. As you know, the spikes of the fagot spears are barbed, to retain a firm hold upon the fagots into which they are plunged. To draw them out, to free the fagots, one must shake and jerk the spear violently.

"I did not shake my spear. I let the handle fall from my hand. I wished the poisoned spike to remain in the wound.

"I folded my arms and gazed at the face of my brother. A slight, a very slight spasm of pain or surprise flashed over his pale heroic face when the spike entered his foot, but he did not raise it nor move it.

"His eyes caught mine. The gesture I made and the posture I assumed, were such as he had often smiled at when we pursued our study of science together. Its signification was:

"I have succeeded in my experiment. Rejoice with me, my dear brother."

"He recognised that gesture, that attitude of triumph. He knew it was I who had wounded him. He knew why I had done it. All passed in a breath. He smiled, ah! a heavenly smile of peace and joy, and cried out:

"So be it! I could not reject the spear-thrust," and clasping his hands, he raised them and his gaze to heaven for an instant, and then his eyes closed, his face sank upon his bosom, his hands fell to his side, his limbs relaxed, the chain around his middle alone held him partially erect; he was dead."

The astronomer paused, and rising, paced the observatory floor to and fro in silence, then sank on his knees, and, with his back towards the shuddering Silva, prayed, with closed eyes and lips but eloquent soul.

"It is true," thought Silva. "The Conde, long before the flames reached him, did seem to die, to fall suddenly into a deep sleep, to become wholly lifeless—dead, in fact!"

The astronomer soon arose from his knees, and returned to his prisoner, saying, as he again sat down, facing Silva:

"He was dead. The Conde did not live two minutes after he received that merciful spear-thrust. The only pain he felt was the momentary shock of the thrust, the slight pain of a lancet stab—not so long, for the ointment on the spike deadened instantly the power to feel the wound.

"The fagots burned, the flames mounted higher and higher, but he felt them not. His enemies were not rejoiced with a single groan. They were gazing

upon the incineration of a corpse, not upon the burning of a live man.

"But the corpse was consumed before my eyes. I was forced to appear zealous in my disguise. There was no escape from that terrible ordeal. But I knew that my brother's soul no longer tenanted that abused body. Better far that that noble frame should be consumed to ashes, than that it should be dragged ignominiously through the streets, mangled, and cast into the Tagus, like carrion. It was nothing, then, to him. His soul had returned to the God who gave it.

"It is true that as the flames lapped and wrapped the body, the features blackened and writhed. Throw even a dead dry leaf into fire, and it writhes, contracts, and moves as if alive. The noble Conde escaped all pain.

"But the revenge of our enemies extended even to his ashes. That which the fire left unconsumed was ordered to be cast into the Tagus. Upon me devolved that office, as captain of the fagot guards.

"My hands collected the calcined bones when all was over. You and all others fled from the furious rain that fell."

"A perfect deluge! I remember it," muttered Silva.

"The show was over. The gay sport of your sight-seers had ended. The stake alone, and its red-hot chain, remained when the heavens opened their flood-gates of rain and hail, and then the great multitude hurried away, leaving, as all imagined, Dominique Pets to collect those burnt bones in a leather sack, and bear them away as infamous, as accursed, as unworthy of burial.

"Alone I collected them, and placed them one by one in the sack. Alone, and weeping like a woman under my mask, I groped and grovelled in the wet, black ashes, fearful lest I might miss a single relic.

"When sure that no more were to be found, with my sad burden in my arms, I took my way to the banks of the Tagus.

"A furious storm caused the streets to be deserted, and my movements were unwatched. I hurried across the Tagus, I fled with all that was left of my brother—I fled from the sight and habitation of men, to the mountains, and there, seen only by the Eye that sees all, I solemnly buried the charred and decorated remains of the godlike Gomez Villota.

"That and office done, I continued my flight. Enough to say to you that I escaped from Portugal. The pursuit and search for Stephano, the outlawed and excommunicated Duke de Villota, was vain.

"With his escape from Lisbon perished his name. For nearly a quarter of a century no one in Lisbon has heard more of Stephano.

"But you see that he is alive, Lorenzo Ritsburg, alive to tell you that you spoke truly at the execution of the Conde."

"In what, lord duke?" asked Silva, trembling.

"The powder-bag contained sand."

"Mercy, Duke Stephano!"

"Ritsburg," replied the astronomer, coldly, "for twenty-five years I have left vengeance to Heaven. I have obeyed the last wish of my brother Gomez. I did not return to Lisbon to seek vengeance of Heaven—that vengeance prophesied by my dying brother. Had you kept out of my way I should not have molested you. I thought I had outlived all human passion. I erred. The desire for vengeance upon the enemies of Gomez Villota flames now as fiercely in my heart as it did when I gazed upon the flames that lapped his corpse yonder in the Ruocco.

"If I spare you, my own life will be taken. You will denounce me, and the Inquisition will burn me as it burnt my brother."

"By all the saints, I swear—" began Silva.

"Silence! There is a falsehood in your face as you swear. Perjury is as the breath of your nostrils to you. I shall avenge my brother first upon you."

"Pardon!"

"I shall deliver you into the hands of the woman whose babe you strangled."

Silva screamed with despair.

"And into the hands of the father of that strangled babe."

"The father!"

"Yes; he too is in my service. He and his wife came together to ask of Demetrius the wizard, tidings of their stolen babe. You have heard of him?"

"Heard of the father of the—I!"

All Lisbon has heard of him. For twenty years he has been known in Lisbon. Brave men cross themselves when they hear his name. He has resigned the office he held twenty years. He resigned it yesterday, to enter my service. He and his wife never had but one child—the babe you strangled. You were absent from Lisbon many years; but two have passed since your return, you said?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Then you may have seen this man who was once a shepherd, but who for twenty years has been known in Lisbon as Torsa."

"Torsa!" shrieked Silva.  
 "Yes, Torsa!"  
 "The chief torturer of the Inquisition! Not that Torsa!" gasped Silva.  
 "Could earth produce two Torsas? Yes: Torsa, chief torturer of the Inquisition, was the father of the babe you strangled. To him, and to his wife Torsetta, I shall deliver you for the punishment you deserve."  
 "Oh, death! rather any death than that, my lord duke!"  
 "The man who used to weep over a wounded lamb lost his only child, and became a torturer of men! Your crime made the change."  
 The fettered ruffian was watching the movements of the astronomer as well as he was able.  
 He saw him select a vial, pour a liquid from it into a glass of wine, and approach him.  
 "Drink," said the astronomer, placing the glass to Silva's lips.  
 Silva swallowed it greedily. He was in an agony of thirst, and besides, he hoped the drink was rank poison.

He longed for death.  
 "There! It is down. Is it poison, my lord duke?"

"You hope it is poison?"  
 "Yes, my lord."  
 "The day has come when you beg for death as a famished man begs for bread, and death shall not be given to you, Lorenzo Ritzburg. I have not given you poison to kill, but to make you sleep."

"To make me sleep?"  
 "Yes, for hours."  
 "For hours! I am to sleep for hours! Here, in this chair, my lord?"

"In that chair. But when you awake you will not be in this room. Ah, you are already drowsy. Your eyelids feel as if made of lead."

In fact Silva had already begun to blink. A deep drowsiness, a heavy languor which he could not resist, was overpowering him. Had his head not been bound to the chair it would have sunk upon his shoulder, or upon his breast.

"When you awake," said the astronomer, in a clear, sharp tone, which for an instant aroused the attention of the drugged man, "you will be in the presence of Torsa and Torsetta. Dream of that as you sleep."

"Mercy! Not that! Pardon!"  
 "Justice, miserable man. Know too that the sleep you now are about to sleep, may be the last you shall sleep except the sleep of death. You will wake on earth once more. After that, when you awake again, you will not be in the presence of Torsa and Torsetta. You will be in the presence of God!"

Silva heard all. His brain was still awake, but his tongue was asleep; he tried to move it, to cry once more for pardon. He could not; it lay in his mouth like lead.

He glared in helpless terror with his eyes for a few moments more, then darkness came upon them and upon his brain. He slept.

We must now follow the fugitive stone-cutter, but we shall see Silva when he awakes.

(To be continued.)

**LICENSED TRADES.**—The system of taxation by means of licences to carry on certain trades supplies in effect an annual census of the occupations to which it is applied. The return recently issued of the taxes of the last financial year, 1868-69, shows 85,414 publicans in England and Ireland; three years previously the number was 83,159. Nearly half occupy premises rated under 20*l.* a year. The increase of beer-shop-keepers in England and Wales has been more rapid; in the year 1865-66 it was 44,623, and in the year 1868-69, 49,130. So also with the keepers of refreshment houses; in 1865-66 they were 5,470, and in 1868-69, 6,407. The spirit retailers in Scotland are returned at 11,704 in 1865-66, 12,022 in 1868-69. The number of persons licensed as dealers in tobacco was 269,819 in 1865-66, and 284,124 in 1868-69. The dealers in tea and coffee increase year by year; in 1865-66 they were 170,294, in 1868-69, 184,287, of whom 74,194 paid only the 2*s.* 6*d.* duty, their premises being rated under 8*l.* a year, and the other 110,043 paid the 11*s.* 6*d.* duty. The (patent, &c.) medicine vendors of Great Britain are a growing number; in 1865-66 they were 11,520, and in 1868-69, 12,271; and the number of stamps required for packets, boxes, &c., of medicine selling for 1*s.* or more was 7,569,083 in the year 1865-66, and had grown to 8,663,685 in 1868-69. Game certificates were taken by 55,465 persons in the former year, and by 57,124 in the latter year; licences to deal in game by 2,112 and 2,287 respectively. In the same period auctioneers increased from 4,908 to 5,276; appraisers and house agents from 3,751 to 3,922. Pawnbrokers were 3,724 in 1865-66, and 3,918 in 1868-69; their licence duty is 1*l.* in London, and half that sum

elsewhere. Papermakers do not greatly multiply; they were 392 in the former year and 408 in the latter year. Horse-dealers (not taxed in Ireland) increased from 1,083 to 1,256. Dealers in plate from 8,529 to 9,521. Bankers have decreased in number since the last commercial crisis; they were 1,213 in 1865-66, only 1,167 in the next year, only 1,148 in 1867-68, but in 1868-69 the number recovered to 1,172. Attorneys and writers to the signet were 13,475 in 1865-66, and exactly the same number in 1868-69; the number was larger in one and smaller in the other of the two intervening years. In some of these occupations, as in that of maltsters and brewers, the amount of duty varies with the quantity manufactured; in some, as with the publicans, the duty varies with the rateable value of the premises; in some, as with the medicine vendors, the duty is smallest in the country, larger in boroughs, largest in London and Edinburgh. Some licence duties are commutations of an older tax; for instance, the auctioneers' 10*l.* licence is substituted for the duty on every sale by auction. Some licence duties produce a very small sum to the public revenue, the licences of makers of playing cards brought only 14*l.* last year; others produce a very large sum, that on brewers 350,000*l.*, and that on spirit dealers and retailers double that amount.

## LEIGHTON HALL.

### CHAPTER VII.

Now whether shall I fly to find relief?  
 What charitable hand will aid me now?  
 Will stay my falling steps, support my ruins,  
 And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort?

Rosa.

Mrs. CHURCHILL was better; her fever had left her, and Georgie promised to find Edna and render her any service in her power. Roy had written to Edna, but though his letter had been despatched for two weeks or more no answer had come to him, and he was beginning to wonder at Edna's silence, and to feel a little piqued, when one day early in December there was brought to him a letter, directed to his mother in a bold, angular handwriting, which at once stamped the writer as a person of striking originality and strongly marked character. In his mother's weak state it would not do to excite her, and so Roy opened the letter himself and glanced at the signature.

"Yours to command,

"LETITIA AMANDA PEPPER."  
 And that worthy woman, who rejoiced in so euphonious a name, wrote to Mrs. Churchill as follows:

"Allen's Hill, Dec. 4th, 18—.

"Mrs. Anna Leighton Churchill,

"Dear Madam,—I've had it on my mind to write to you ever since that terrible disaster by which you were deprived of a son, who was taken to eternity without even the chance for one last prayer or cry to be saved. Let us hope he had made his prayers beforehand, and had no need for them.

"But not to harrow up your feelings, what I want to say is that I do not and never have for a single moment upheld my niece, or rather my great-niece, Edna, in what she has done. I took her when her father died, twelve years ago, and have been a mother to her ever since, and made her learn the catechism and creed, and thoroughly indoctrinated her with my views, and sent her to Sunday-school, and always gave her something from the Christmas-tree, and insisted upon her keeping all the fasts, and had her confirmed, and she turned out High Church after all, and ran away with your son. But I wash my hands of her now.

"My object in writing this to you is to give you some little insight into the character of the family you are connected with by marriage, and to let you know I don't take my niece's part, although it is natural that I should find more excuse for her than you, who probably think it a disgrace to be connected with the Peppers. But if you choose to inquire hereabouts you'll find that I am greatly respected and looked up to in the church, of which I am in some sort a pillar, and if you ever come this way give me a call, and I will do the same by you. If you feel disposed, write to me; if not, not.

"Wishing you all consolation in your son's death,

"Yours to command,

"LETITIA AMANDA PEPPER."

This was Miss Pepper's letter, written with a great deal of care both as to orthography and chirography and composition, and Roy read it with mingled emotions of disgust and indignation, and finally of tolerance and even kindly feeling towards the writer, who had commenced with being so hard upon her niece, but had evidently softened as she progressed, and at last had spoken of her with a good deal of interest and even sympathy.

"Poor little thing," Roy called Edna now, not "brave little woman," but "poor little thing."

She seemed to him like a girl, and he longed to take her up in his arms as he would a child, and comfort her. From the tenor of the first part of Miss Pepper's letter he could imagine, or thought he could, just how hard, and grim, and stern the woman was, and just how dreary and cheerless Edna's life had been with her.

"I don't wonder she married the first one that offered," he said, and then as he recalled the man Dana, who, after the two weeks of freedom, had asked Edna to be his wife, he felt a flush of resentment tinge his cheeks, and his fists clenched with a desire to knock the impudent Dana down.

"And it is to such insults as these she is liable at any time; poor little thing, fighting her way alone in the cold, harsh world, though by Jove I don't blame her for leaving that Pepper-corn, goading and badgering her about the ring. Only seventeen, as much a girl as she ever was, a wife of a few hours, a widow turned out into the world to shift for herself, and here I have more money than I know what to do with. I'll go for her at once, go this very day," and forgetting his lame leg in his excitement, Roy sprang to his feet, but a sharp twinge of pain brought him to his senses, and to his chair again. "I can't go. Confound it! I'm a cripple," he said; then as he remembered that he did not know where Edna was, that nobody knew, he groaned aloud, and blamed himself severely for having indulged in his old habit of procrastination, and so deferred the writing of his letter to Edna until it was too late.

For of course she never got it. If she had, it might have changed her whole line of conduct. At least, she would have known that she had two earthly friends, one Roy, and the other the one she had mentioned to her aunt as powerless to help her. Who was he? For she distinctly said "he."

"Not Dana, else she had not fled from him and his offer," and with his sound leg Roy kicked a footstool, as the combined representative of the audacious Dana and Miss Letitia Pepper.

He was glad that woman was no nearer relative to Edna than great-aunt, and so was his mother, for after his ebullition of anger was over he decided to take the letter to her, and tell her what Edna had written to himself.

As Georgie was not present, there was no counter-influence at work, and Roy's voice and manner told plainly which way he leaned.

In this state of things Mrs. Churchill went with the tide, and cried softly unobserved, and said there was more in Edna than she had supposed, and hoped Roy would pay that abominable Pepper woman, who thought to make friends with them by taking sides against her niece!

If this had been Miss Letitia's object, she lost her case, for her letter produced just the contrary effect; it disgusted Mrs. Churchill with Miss Pepper, and made her more lenient towards Edna.

Perhaps if she had known where Edna was, and that Roy might possibly bring her home, she would have hesitated before speaking for the girl; but she did not know, nobody knew—Roy, nor anybody. There was no danger to be apprehended from her coming there, and so she took sides against Miss Pepper, and insisted that Roy should at once liquidate Edna's debt to her.

"She's a perfect old shrew—a female Shylock, you may be assured, and will take every farthing of principal and interest. Write to her now, and have it done with."

"And suppose I do," said Roy; "what warrant have we that this woman will not exact it just the same of Edna, who has no means of knowing that we have paid it?"

"I know she will not do that," Mrs. Churchill replied. "Disgusting as her letter is, I think it shows her to be honest, at least. At all events, I should test her."

Roy did not wait this time, but wrote at once to Miss Pepper, inclosing his cheque, and asking, in return, for her receipt and Edna's note. Roy's letter, of a few lines only, was not a very cordial one, and shrewd Miss Letitia detected its spirit, and sent back the cheque forthwith. This time she wrote to Roy, telling him that she could see through a mill-stone any time; that it was kind in him to offer to pay Edna's debts, but she did not see the necessity of insulting her with a suspicion of unfair dealing with her own flesh and blood. He didn't know her standing in the church, and had better inquire next time. As for Edna, he need not worry about her. She (Miss Pepper) did not intend to harm her. She only wanted to see how much spirit there was in the girl; and he would see some time, perhaps, that a Pepper could be as generous as a Leighton.

Roy could not complain of the last sentiment, for he had himself been conscious of a desire to let Edna alone for a time, and see what was in her. But he did not feel so now, and if he had known where she was he would have gone for her and brought her home to Leighton. But he did not know. The last intelligence he had of her was received in a letter which had been posted two days after the date of Miss Pepper's effusion. In this letter



Edna wrote that she had disposed of her watch and coral; sending a portion of the proceeds to Roy for the balance due for the jewellery.

"You will forgive me, Mr. Leighton, for not sending the whole. I would do so, but I must have something for myself to begin my new life with. I don't exactly know what I shall do, but think I shall teach drawing. As fast as I learn anything I shall send it to you, or part. Mr. Leighton, I have another debt besides yours, and perhaps you won't mind if I try to pay that as soon as possible. It will only make your time a little longer, and I do so much want that other one off my mind."

"I don't wonder she does," Roy said, as he finished reading the letter to his mother, who, with himself, began to feel a deep interest in this "brave little woman," as Roy called her aloud.

"She writes a very fair hand and expresses herself well," Mrs. Churchill said, examining the letter, and wondering where Edna was. "We have done our duty, at all events," she added, "and I do not think anybody could require more of us."

Roy did not tell all he thought. It would not have pleased his mother if he had, and so he kept silent while she really flattered herself that they had done every possible thing which could be expected of them. "Roy had tried to pay Edna's debts, and that he had not done so was not his fault, while she harboured no unkindness now towards the poor girl," she said to George Burton, who came over in the afternoon to say good-bye, as she was actually going at last. Roy would never have told George of Edna's affairs, but his mother had no concealments from her, and repeated to her the whole story.

"Of course you have done your duty; an angel could not do more. And now I would not give it any more thought, but try to get well and be yourself again," George said, kissing her friend tenderly, and telling her of her projected journey.

Mrs. Churchill was very sorry to have George go away, and Roy was, after a fashion, sorry too. From hearing it talked about by his mother he had grown accustomed to thinking of her as the probable future mistress of his house. He was much better now, and able to walk with only a cane, and he went down to the carriage with George, and told her how much he should miss her, and that she must make her absence as brief as possible.

"Remember me to your brother," he said, as he finally offered her his hand; then after a moment he added: "I did hope to have sent some message direct to our poor little girl. Maybe you can learn something of her present whereabouts. I am most anxious to know where she is."

He held George's hand all the time he was saying this, and George's black eyes were very soft and pitiful in their expression as she promised to "find out all she could about the poor, dear child."

"You will take cold if you stand there any longer," she added, at last.

And so Roy's good-bye was spoken. And when, next day, Mrs. Burton came over from Oakwood, she reported her niece as on her way.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Sweet as refreshing dew or summer showers,  
To the long parching thirst of drooping flowers;  
Grateful as fanning gales to fainting swains,  
And soft as trickling balm to bleeding pains,—  
Such are thy words! Gay.

SHE was a brave little woman, but she did not know herself of what she was capable, or how soon her capabilities were to be developed on that October morning when she entered the train, a happy bride. Happy, but for the thought which would keep intruding itself, that perhaps she had not done the wisest thing in marrying so secretly. What would her friends say when they heard what use she had made of their permission for her to accompany her sick friend home? And what would Aunt Letty say to the runaway match, when she was so great a stickler for the proprieties of life?

Edna said to herself, trying to laugh as she recalled her aunt's peculiarities, and the probable effect the news would have on her, "I don't care! I'm glad to be free from her any way," she thought, as she remembered, with a shudder, all the dreariness and longing for something different which she had felt in that house by the graveyard where her childhood was passed.

It had never been hers to know the happiness which many children know. No mother had ever put her to bed with loving words and the good-night kiss. No hand had smoothed her locks of golden brown, as she said her little prayer, kneeling by the motherly knee. No pleasant voice had waked her in the morning from her dreamless sleep, and found excuse when the slumber was so hard to break, the eyes so unwilling to unclose. No little extra pie or cake was ever baked for her; and no genuine doll-baby ever lay in any box, or basket, or drawer in that prim, silent house. She never had a doll in all her life. Aunt Letty had no money to waste upon such useless things. She never had a picture-book, except the one her teacher gave her.

Aunt Letty had enough to do to keep her in school books, letting alone the pictures. She never "gormandised" with pie and cake. Aunt Letty did not believe in it. "She gave the child enough to eat of good, plain, wholesome victuals, and that was all anyone could ask." She knew, too, that Edna said her prayers, for she had taught them to her, not with long-enduring patience and gentle persuasive words, but with a continual badgering and a threatening of the rod if the task were not accomplished within a given time. There was no tucking up on winter nights; no loving solicitude to see if the little hands and feet were warm. Edna knitted or sewed till eight o'clock, and then prompt with the first stroke put by her work and took the tallow candle from the mantel-piece, and without a word stole up the steep back stairs to the not uncomfortable room where stood her little bed; and many a night she crept trembling into it, and hiding her face under the clothes, said the prayer learned with so many tears, not from any sense of duty, but because of the question sure to be put to her next morning, "Did you say your prayers, Edna?"

Aunt Letty meant to do her duty, and thought she did it when she tried to repress her naturally gay, light-hearted niece, and make her into a sober, quiet girl, content to sew the blessed day through and knit the livelong evening.

But Edna was like a rubber ball—she could be crushed, but she would not stay so, and the moment the oppressor's foot was removed she bounded back again, as full of fun, and frolic, and life as ever! So when at the age of fifteen she recovered all her elasticity of spirits, and, freed from her aunt's scrutiny, seemed constantly bubbling over with happiness and joy, she was immensely popular.

Charlie Churchill was in love with her at once—desperately, irretrievably in love, and though she snubbed him at first, and made laughable caricatures of him in his foppish clothes, with his eye-glass, which he carried for no earthly reason except to be dandyish, she ended by returning his affection, and pledging herself to him on the fly-leaf of her algebra, that being the only bit of paper available at the time.

Charlie had the reputation of being very rich—his or joint-heir with his brother of the Leighton estates. And Edna fully believed it, as why should she not? when he always seemed so flush with money, and talked so largely of "my house, my horses, my hounds, my park." All mine—nothing Roy's, "Old Roy," as he usually designated his brother, whom Edna thought of as a sober, gray-haired, middle-aged man, who was at Leighton Hall rather on sufferance than as its rightful owner.

After her adventure in the train, and she had learned that the man she had caricatured was the veritable Roy, she thought him rather younger and better-looking than she had supposed, but still esteemed him a kind of supernumerary, who would be dreadfully in her way when she was mistress at Leighton, and of whom she would dispose as soon as possible.

She would do nothing unkind, she thought, nothing for which any one could blame her; but it was so much better for young folks and old folks to live apart, that she would cause to be fitted up some one of the numerous cottages Charlie had told her were on his place.

There was one near the river, a Gothic cottage, he said, somewhat out of repair. This she would improve, and beautify, and furnish tastefully, and move Roy and his mother thither, where they could not be disturbed by the gaieties at Leighton. For she meant to be very gay, and have the house full constantly, and had made out a list of those who were to be her guests.

Aunt Letty was to come, and the carriage should take her to the little church. Edna had the programme of her future life all marked out, even to the dresses she would wear on different occasions. And she knew exactly how beautiful her future home was; for Charlie had described it so minutely that she had made a little sketch of it. And then, with Charlie to suggest, had corrected, and improved, and enlarged it until it was a very accurate picture of the grounds and house at Leighton; with Edna herself on the steps, fastening a rose in Charlie's button-hole.

The likeness to Charlie was perfect, and Edna prized it most for this, and put it away in her portfolio of drawings; and went on dreaming her bright dreams of the glorious future opening so joyfully before her.

She was not mercenary, and would have loved and married Charlie all the same if he had not been rich, as she believed him to be. But that he had money, she was very glad, for her tastes were naturally luxurious. She liked beautiful things about her; and then she could do so much good, and make so many happy, she said to Charlie, when he asked her once how she would feel if she knew he was as poor as a church mouse.

Charlie had made up his mind to tell her the truth, for his conscience troubled him greatly, and so he

asked her the question, and among other things, she replied:

"I do not care for your money, Charlie, and should love you just the same if you had not a penny. The only thing that could change me towards you would be losing confidence in you, finding out that you were not as good as you seem to be, and that I never shall."

Charlie could not tell this girl, whose soft eyes were looking so trustfully into his, that he was deceiving her, and so he let her dream on; and tried to think whether he ever had told her that he was the heir of Leighton, and concluded that he had not. She had taken it for granted, and he was not responsible for the mistake.

Then, he trusted much to Roy's generosity. Roy would let them live at Leighton, of course, and it would be Edna's home just the same as if he owned it, only he did not know about moving his mother and Roy into that cottage.

But he would not worry; it would all be right, and, in any event, Edna would be his, and could not "go back on him," when she did find out, and he could easily persuade her it was all done from love and his fear of losing her.

So he silenced his conscience and let her go on blindly towards her fate, and surprised her one day with a proposition to elope.

At first Edna refused—flatly, positively refused; but when the post brought her a letter from Aunt Letty, she began to waver. She had asked her aunt for more pocket money, and her aunt had written a stinging reply, telling her she had a shilling when she left home three weeks ago. What had become of that?

"I shan't send you any for three weeks to come; than I shall be in town, and if I hear a good account of you shall give you sixpence."

"P.S.—I've been half sorry that I let you go back to school this winter, for I'm not feeling very well, and I shouldn't wonder if I took you home with me."

Now Edna knew she had not spent her pocket-money in a way of which her aunt would at all approve, just as she knew she should be compelled to render a strict account for every penny. The possibility of being taken from school and compelled to pass the dreary, dreadful winter in that lonely house by the graveyard, with no companions but the cat and her own gloomy thoughts. Edna thought of all this with a shudder, and then remembered that Charlie had said, "I shall see you again to-night, when I hope to find you have changed your mind and will go with me yet."

And Edna began to hesitate and balance the two situations offered for her acceptance. One, the lonely house, the dreary winter, and the tyrannical aunt; the other, Leighton, with its freedom from all restraint, its life of perfect ease, and Charlie! Can we wonder that she chose the latter, and told Charlie "Yes," instead of "No," that night, and planned the visit to Mrs. Dana, her mother's cousin, and looked upon the proposition to accompany her sick friend home as something providential? There was no looking back after that, and Edna hardly stopped to think what she was doing, or to consider the consequences, until she found herself a bride. She was very happy, and her happiness showed itself in the sparkle of her eye, and the bright flush on her cheeks, and the restlessness of her little head, which tossed and turned itself airily, and kept the golden-brown curls in constant motion.

Charlie, too, was happy, or would have been, could he have felt quite sure that Roy would send that money, without which he would be reduced to most unpleasant straits, unless he pawned his watch. He could do that, and he decided that he would, but as it could not be done until he reached town, and his purse, after paying the clergyman and paying for his tickets, and paying for the book which Edna wanted, was none the heavier, he feigned not to be hungry when they stopped for refreshments, and so had only Edna's to pay for, and contented himself with a biscuit and a glass of pale ale; and himself suggested that they should travel all night, instead of stopping at some horrid hotel, where the fare was execrable.

And Edna consented to everything, and as the evening advanced and she began to grow weary, nestled her curly head down on Charlie's shoulder and slept as soundly as if she had been at home in her own room looking out upon the graves behind the churchyard. Once about midnight, as they stopped at some station, Charlie went out for a minute, and when he returned and took his seat beside her, he said hurriedly, as if it were something for which he was not very glad:

"I have just recognised two old acquaintances in the rear carriage, Heyford and George Burton. hope they won't see us. I like Heyford well enough, but to have that George's great big eyes staring at you I could not bear."

"Who is George Burton, and who is Heyford?" Edna asked.

And Charlie replied:

"Georgie lives at Oakwood, near Leighton Hall, and is the proudest, stuck-up thing, and has tried her best to catch old Roy. I think she'll do it, too, in time, and then, my — won't she snub you, because —"

He hesitated a moment, while Edna said: "Because what? Tell me, please, why Georgie Burton will snub me?"

"Well, because you are poor, and she is rich," Charlie jerked out.

And Edna said innocently: "But I shall be rich then; as rich as she, won't I, Charlie?"

Her clear, honest eyes were fixed upon his without a shadow of suspicion, and Charlie could not undeceive her and tell her that ten pounds was all the money he had in the world, that to defray the expenses of that journey he had sold a set of diamond studs, and if Roy did not come to the rescue his watch must get them back to Leighton, for he meant to go there whether wanted or not.

"Even if you were not rich you would be worth a hundred Georgie Burtons," he said, as he drew her closely to his side, and then he spoke of Heyford, Georgie's half-brother, and the best fellow in the world; and Edna listened awhile, until things began to get a little mixed in her brain, and her head lay again on Charlie's shoulder, and her soft eyes were closed in sleep.

The day had been very warm and even sultry, and although somewhat out of season a heavy thunderstorm had come up, and the darkness without grew darker as the rain beat against the windows, and flashes of lightning showed occasionally against the ink sky. Faster and faster the train sped on, and Charlie's head drooped till his locks mingled with Edna's curls of golden brown, and in his sleep his arm tightened around her slender waist; and he was dreaming perhaps of Leighton, and Roy, and his mother, and what they would say to his wife, when suddenly, without a moment's warning, came the fearful crash, and the next flash of lightning which lit up the gloom showed a dreadful sight of broken beams, and shattered boards, and shivered glass, and a boyish form wedged tightly in between, its white face upturned to the pitiless sky, while beside it in dumb terror, crouched the girlish bride, every feature frozen with horror, and her little hands trying in vain to extricate her lover, while her quivering lips kept whispering, "Charlie! oh, Charlie!"

(To be continued.)

## FACETIÆ.

### COMPLIMENTARY.

A POLICE-OFFICER, seeing a nigger whom he knew, exclaimed:

"Ah, Sambo, you are an honest, faithful fellow. I'll give you a drink."

"With all my heart, sar," said Sambo, "with all dis child's heart. Some niggers are haughty and proud, and won't stoop to drink with a police-officer; but dat's wrong. I tink a police-officer, almost, if not every way, as good as a nigger—specially when a nigger's thirsty."

"Who's that gentleman, my little man?" was asked of a little boy.

"That one with the tailed coat?"

"Yes," was the response.

"Why, he's a brevet uncle of mine."

"How's that?" was asked.

"'Cause he's engaged to my Aunt Mary."

A MAN has invented a pocket-stove warmed by alcohol. We have seen one of them. It looks very much like a pint flask filled with brandy.

A BROWN WEDDING.—A wedding occurred recently at a farmhouse a few miles south-east of Kansas City. The bridegroom was named Brown, and also the bride. None but relations attended the wedding, and no relations of the family were present excepting those whose names were Brown. Fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, and cousins of the newly-married couple, to the number of sixty-one, were in attendance. The minister's name was Brown. Certainly the wedding is one of the Brownest affairs we ever before heard of.

NOT TO BE PLUCKED.—The Press Association having "a crow to pick" with the Postal Telegraph bunting, have gone back to the old system, and have selected carrier pigeons in preference to official gulls. This is a foul disgrace to the Post-office!—*Fun.*

LENT TO READ.—Messrs. Houlston advertise "Notes on Fasting." By a Layman. Another title, perhaps, fitting this book, would be "The Autobiography of Emptiness."—*Punch.*

INVALID.—Bury St. Edmunds is not a good place to rusticate in—it's so Saffolkating.—*Judy.*

WHILE CREATION!—It is said that an offer of ten pounds was made the other day by the managers of a literary institution to Calcraft, if he would come down and lecture. He declined, saying litera-

ture was not his "line." The managers ought to find their line in a rope's end!—*Fun.*

THE LAST SLIP OF THE SEASON.—Tears were observed coursing each other down the furrowed cheeks of a veteran lover of the leash on this touching occasion. They ran into the hair in his beard.—*Fun.*

### TWO DIFFERENT STORIES.

A WITNESS in a trial at Liverpool, before Mr. Justice Martin, persisted in telling what other people said, and interlarded his testimony so often with "said I" and "said he," that the counsel was utterly bewildered. The court attempted to set him aright.

"My good man, tell us exactly what happened."

"Yes, my lord, certainly. I said I should not have the pig."

"Well, what was his answer?"

"No, no, he did not say that—he could not have said it; he spoke in the first person."

"I was the first person that spoke, my lord."

"I mean this—don't bring in the third person; repeat his exact words."

"There was no third person, my lord; only him and me."

"Look here, my good fellow, he did not say he had been keeping the pig; he said, I have been keeping it."

"I assure you, my lord, there was no mention of your lordship at all. We are on two different stories, my lord. There was no third person, my lord, and if anything had been said about your lordship I must have heard it."

O IMITATORS, SERVUM PECUS!—Owing to the popularity gained by "Cometh up as a Flower," some simious writer will perhaps produce a tale under the title of "Cometh up as a Fungus."—*Punch.*

### A GAME CHICKEN.

Fast Girl (to Sporting Gent). I say, Dick, the "Colonel" has won the Grand National by a neck.

You owe me a pair of gloves.

Gent. I do. What sort?

Girl. Boxing gloves.—*Punch.*

AN UNLUCKY QUESTION.—Watermore is a strict teetotaler (and just a little bald on the top of his head. Imagine, then, his horror at being asked, the other day at Thoroff's by the assistant who was cutting his hair, whether he ever applied stimulants to it!—*Punch.*

A DIMINUTIVE acquaintance of mine will never allow grocery to be left at his door. He says it annoys him to have a man come two or three times a week and shout out "grocer!" (grow, sir).—*Will o' the Wisp.*

A LITTLE RECOLLECTION OF A CERTAIN DAY LAST SEASON.

Huntsman.—Hold hard, there, Mossos! Mind the hounds!

Mossos.—Ah, mon ami, never fear—I shall mind they do not be first!—*Judy.*

THE following story is typical of the happy Hibernian art of shooting round the corner:

Lord L.—made a point of strictly cross-questioning his domestics as to their religious and political faith before he engaged them. While residing on his Irish estates a groom presented himself to be hired, but resolved beforehand not to compromise himself by any inconsiderate replies.

"What are your opinions?" was the peer's first demand.

"Indeed, then, your lordship, I have just none at all."

"Not any! Nonsense! You must have some, and I insist on knowing them."

"Why, then, they are for all the world just the same as your lordship's."

"Then you can have no objection to state them, and confess frankly what is your way of thinking?"

"Och! and is it my way of thinking you mane by my opinions? Why, then, I am exactly of the same way of thinking as Sullivan, your honour's gamekeeper; for says he to me, as I was coming downstairs, 'Murphy,' says he, 'I'm thinking you'll never be paying me that two-and-twenty shillings I lent you last Christmas was a twelvemonth.'"

"Faith," says I, "Sullivan, I'm quite of your way of thinking."

AN astronomer predicts for this year a comet of such brilliancy, and so near the earth, that the nights will be almost as bright as our days. The gas companies "can't see it"—or at least they don't want to see it.

"Is your house a warm one, landlord?" asked a gentleman, in search of a house. "It ought to be," was the reply. "The painter gave it two coats recently."

LOW CLASS LEGISLATION.—Mr. Pimmsoll's bill for making foot-warmers compulsory in railway carriages, irrespective of class, was thrown out by a majority of 32 in a house of 184. Mr. Pimmsoll rested his case on the discomfort of the poorer kind of travellers. He should have remembered the

proverb, *De minimis non curat lex*, which we translate: "The Legislature doesn't care for third-class passengers."—*Punch.*

### IMPERIAL ECONOMY.

We live in wonderful times. Only look at this: "It has been remarked that the Empress Eugénie this year sometimes appears twice in the same day in the same dress, which was never the case before."

This unparalleled economy the French papers attribute to the pressure of reform which has been put upon the Emperor. His Majesty has made certain liberal professions and deems it constitutional to be a little stingy. So the Empress is obliged to wear her dresses twice, and who can tell what pangs this retrenchment may have cost her? We hope her self-denial may largely bear good fruit, and that ladies generally may imitate her prudence. The Empress sets the fashions, and ladies love to copy her as nearly as they can, but it is now for them to learn from her a lesson in economy. If the Empress condescends to wear the same dress twice in four-and-twenty hours, Mrs. Smith may surely be satisfied in future with only ordering a new dress not more than once a week, and Mrs. Brown may somehow even manage to exist for as long as a whole fortnight without buying a new bonnet.—*Punch.*

### AWKWARD!

Literal Servant Girl (to Brown, who was calling for the first time on the *Dibworth*): "Please, sir, your cabman say he don't half like the look of this here half-crown you've give him!"—*Punch.*

AND now another fond delusion has vanished. We are told that the gold-heads of our grandmothers are once more fashionable. "Gold-heads!" "Grandmothers!" We had no idea our grandmothers were given to such vanities.

"DOCTOR," said a young lady of the high-heeled modesty school, "Ma sent me to tell you that sister Maria Euphemia Duley Louisa Minerva Rhody Jane has got a sore above the waist of her left foot, between the wrist and shoulder."

"JAMIE," said one honest Irishman to another, the first time he saw a locomotive: "what is that snorting baste?"

"Sure," replied Jamie, "I don't know at all, unless it's a steamboat splurging along to get to the wather."

"Boy, why don't you go to school?"

"Cause, sir, daddy is afraid that if I larns every-thing now, I shan't have anything to larn von I come to the 'cademy.'"

If you toast a round of bread, and I eat the greater part of it, how do we differ from one another? One makes the toast and the other takes the most.

### NOT IMPROBABLE.

First Banker's Clerk (standing). "Been 'to see these performing monkeys, Gibbon?"

Second Banker's Clerk. "Yes! by Jove, it's wonderful. I believe they'll get monkeys to talk and write soon."—*Punch.*

### AGGRAVATING FLIPPANCY.

Enthusiastic Amateur. "Oh! hang it, Celia! not ready yet! and I've got to play in the first Quartet... Do look sharp!"

Celia. "Now don't fidget, my dear! There's lot's of time, and if we are a little late, you can play a little faster, you know..."—*Punch.*

LOOK OUT!—English girls are not thought to show the white feather when on horseback, yet you may see it any day in Rotten Row.—*Punch.*

A HUSBAND advertises thus: "My wife Maria has strayed or been stolen. Whoever returns her will get his head broke. As to trusting her, anybody can do so if they see fit; for as I never pay my own debts, it's not likely I'll pay hers."

A YOUNG widow was asked why she was going to get married so soon after the death of her first husband. "O, la!" said she, "I do it to prevent frost-ting myself to death on account of dear Tom."

"JOHN, what is a gentleman?"

"Stub-toe boots, short-tail coat, high shirt collar, and tight pants."

"What is the work of a gentleman?"

"To borrow money, to eat large dinners, to go to the opera, and to petition for an office."

"What is the first duty of a gentleman to himself?"

"To raise a huge pair of whiskers."

A NARROW ESCAPE.—A Milesian, born on the last day of the year, felicitates himself on his narrow escape from not being born at all. "Bejabbers!" says he, "an if it had been the next day what would have become of me?"

"How do you feel with such a shocking-looking coat on?" said a young clerk of pretensions, one morning, to an old farmer. "I feel," said the old farmer, looking at him steadily, with one eye half closed, as if taking aim at his victim, "I feel, young man, as if I had a coat which has been paid for—a luxury of feeling which I think you will never experience."

FOR GRAMMARIANS.—A conversation took place down East, between a young lady who writes for



the magazines, and an old gentleman who could speak English:

Old Gentleman: "Are there any houses building in your village?"

Young Lady: "No, sir. There is a new house being built for Mr. Smith, but it is the carpenters who are building."

Gentleman: "True, I sit corrected. To be building is certainly a different thing from to be being built; and how long has Mr. Smith's house been being built?"

Lady (Looks puzzled a moment and then answers rather abruptly): "Nearly a year."

Gentleman: "How much longer do you think it will be being built?"

Lady (Explosively): "Don't know."

Gentleman: "I should think Mr. Smith would be annoyed by its being so long being built, for the house he now occupies being old, he must leave it, and the new one being only being built instead of being built as he expected, he cannot—"

The young lady leaves the room very suddenly.

**DREADFUL DEATH.**—Mr. Williams, station master at Tenby, while sitting writing in the telegraph office recently, was struck on the head by a piece of rock from the quarry in the vicinity where blasting operations were going on, and instantly killed.

A GENERAL order received at Chatham directs that the cavalry depot at Canterbury and the several depot battalions of infantry, with the exception of one to be temporarily retained at Chatham, are to be broken up, and in lieu thereof the depôts of regiments of cavalry and of battalions of infantry serving abroad will be severally attached to regiments and battalions serving at home, and will move with them on change of quarters.

**SINKING OF A ROADWAY ALONG THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY.**—For some time past the roadway in Turmill-street, Clerkenwell-green, along the Metropolitan Railway, from near Cowcross-street to within a few yards of the Seasons-house, has been sinking. Men have been at work endeavouring to arrest the tendency, but the sinking continued, and some houses which had been lately underpinned showed further signs of giving way, much to the alarm of the inmates. Every precaution has been taken to prevent a catastrophe.

**SAD EVENT AT WELLINGTON COLLEGE.**—On Tuesday afternoon, the 22nd ult., an inquest was held at the Wellington Hotel on the body of a young gentleman named William Reginald Blacket-Ord, between 16 and 17 years of age. It appears that the deceased is the son of a widow lady residing in Scotland. He was quiet and studious, and was in the highest form of the middle class. He was much liked by both masters and boys. On Saturday he was visited by his brother, who remained with him all the afternoon. On Sunday morning deceased asked his class master to excuse him from chapel in consequence of feeling unwell and having a headache. A youth in an adjoining dormitory saw the deceased alive about a quarter to one o'clock, and about seven or eight minutes afterwards saw him hanging in his dormitory dead. The deceased was first discovered by one of the servants at the college, and his neck was then in a noose of the ash line by which the window blinds are drawn aside. He was kneeling on the floor on one knee, partially attired, and his head hanging forward. He was not then quite dead, but expired two minutes after being cut down. The jury returned an open verdict.

**WEST INDIA AND PANAMA CABLE.**—A steam launch has just been completed by Messrs. Yarrow and Hedley, of Poplar, destined to accompany the steamship Dacia, which vessel will shortly leave the Victoria Docks with the above cable on board. This launch is built of steel, so arranged as to be lowered from the ship's davits with steam up, in which condition it will weigh from two to two and a quarter tons. The special office this little craft is intended for in the expedition is to assist in laying the shore ends, which generally involves great delay and fatigue by the present mode of employing ships' boats.

**BLUE GOWN.**—It is reported that Messrs. Tattersall have just disposed of Sir Joseph Hawley's Blue Gown for 5000*l.* and his engagements to M. André for a company of German sportsmen, who have purchased him with a view to the principal prizes at Deauville, Paris, and Baden-Baden. He is to remain at Kingsclere with Porter until the Newmarket Craven Meeting, when he is to be delivered up to M. André's order.

**INFAMOUS COLLIERY OUTRAGE.**—A short time since a serious outrage was committed at the colliery of Messrs. James Rhodes and Son, Coal Aston. A young brother of the engine-tender, Henry Havenhand, went with a young man named Townsend to let some men into the pit, having done which they left, everything at the time being right. About half-past five the next morning, on the engine-tender ar-

riving at the pit, he found an entrance had been effected into the engine-house. The engine had been set going, the chair being drawn over the pulley-wheel of the head-gear of the pit, and the pulley-wheel broken, with the spur-wheel of the winding-drum. Inspector Brady was communicated with, and visited the colliery to investigate the matter, but failed to obtain any clue to the discovery of the perpetrators of the outrage. It is somewhat remarkable that when Inspector Brady saw Townsend, before the officer had time to speak to him, he (Townsend) said, "Oh, I know what you are come for; I have a witness that can clear me." The language of Townsend is also more singular from the fact that he had not been charged in any way with having any knowledge of the affair. The effect of the damage will be to throw out of employment a week or more a great number of men. Messrs. Rhodes and Son, who have had no dispute with their men, offer a reward of 250*l.* for such information as will lead to the conviction of the perpetrator of this gross outrage.

#### APRIL.

'Tis weeping April; all the world is love,  
The earth, the air, the very heavens above.  
Now little lambskins gambol o'er the plain,  
And fairest flowers deck the village lane;  
Cowslip and violet tremble in the breeze,  
And happy birds are twittering on the trees.  
How sweet it is to feel the breath of Spring!  
Here would I wander oft, to sigh or sing;  
What lovely scenes, what vernal beauties rise!  
'Tis Spring—sweet Spring, where'er I turn my eyes!

O hallowed spot! more pleasure here I find  
Than all the sweets with company combined.  
How still the eve, save when the thrush's song  
Beguiles the traveller as he walks along,  
Or low faint sounds that linger through the dell,  
Or village carol floating by the well,  
The milkmaid's hymn, the distant watch-dog's bark,

And the last lay of the descending lark!  
How grand the scene! no painter could portray  
A sky so glorious at the close of day.  
What golden tints commingle with the blue,  
As if all heaven were bursting on my view!

'Tis sweet at eve beside some ruin old  
To watch the great sun sinking down in gold:  
'Tis sweet to mark the first unrolling star  
Through the deep twilight twinkle from afar:  
'Tis sweet to hear the wood nymphs in the dale  
By the green rushes murmur forth their tale;  
Whilst o'er the meadows floats the peasant's song,  
As to his home he gladly hies along.  
Be mine the joy at twilight hour to rove  
O'er pathless wilds, or by the shady grove,  
Through hawthorn lanes, or in the mossy fens,  
Far from the homes, far from the haunts of men;  
To learn of Nature's wonder-working plan:  
No fuller bliss awaits the musing man.

J. HARRIS.

#### GEMS.

**SLANDER** is the revenge of a coward, and dissimulation his defence.

CAST no dirt into the well that has given you water when you were thirsty.

TAKE liberty allows each individual to do all the good he can for himself, without injuring his neighbour.

PEOPLE in a passion seldom wish their questions to be answered at all, and never that they should be answered coolly and with reason.

THE parent who would train up a child in the way he should go, must go the way he would train up his child in.

THE human heart is made for love, as the household hearth for fire; and for truth, as the household lamp for light.

HATE no opinions for being contrary to thine own. It is not certain but thou thyself mayest be in the wrong.

THOSE who engage in the pursuit of happiness should not encumber themselves with unnecessary things.

#### STATISTICS.

**THE PROGRESS OF OCEAN TELEGRAPHY.**—A large number of ocean-telegraph companies have been launched within the last few months. The successful laying of the French cable caused an effusion of projects of this class. No less than thirteen were brought forward together, all but simultaneously. Omitting those which have either been withdrawn or superseded, we have a list of ten which keep their ground, and the capital represented by them is as follows:—1. British Indian

Submarine Telegraph—Suez to Aden and Bombay, 3,200,000*l.*; 2. Falmouth, Gibraltar, and Malta, 660,000*l.*; 3. Great Northern Telegraph—extension and purchase of lines in Northern Europe, 400,000*l.*; 4. International Mid-Channel, 25,000*l.*; 5. West India and Panama, 650,000*l.*; 6. British Indian Extension—Ceylon, Singapore, 400,000*l.*; 7. China Submarine Telegraph—Singapore to Hong Kong and Shanghai—first section, 525,000*l.*; ditto, additional capital for second section, 300,000*l.*; 8. British Australian, 660,000*l.*; 9. Great Northern Telegraph—China and Japan Extension, 600,000*l.*; 10. Panama and South Pacific, 320,000*l.*

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**CLEANING DUST FROM THE CLOTHES.**—Moisten a sponge with pure water, press it in a very clean towel till it becomes nearly dry; then sponge, one place after the other, the cloth; all the dust will enter into the sponge; wash the sponge afterwards in water. This method of cleaning wears the clothes out less than brushing. Many spots also disappear with pure water.

A GOOD black japan is made of burnt umber, 4 ounces; true asphaltum, 2 ounces; and boiled oil, 2 quarts. Dissolve the asphaltum at first in a little oil, using a moderate heat; then add the umber, ground in oil, and lastly, the rest of the oil, and incorporate thoroughly. Thin with turpentine. It is a flexible japan, and may be used on metal work which requires to be bent somewhat.

**EGG PRESERVING.**—Allow me to communicate a simple method which was tried successfully last year by Lady Tancred. She recommends taking fresh set from the loin of mutton, rubbing the egg with this, and then rolling the greased egg in the warm hands till it is well greased and the fat absorbed by the shell. The eggs are then to be placed in layers in jars, the small ends downwards, in a stratum of dry sand—more sand to be poured over the first layer, and then a second layer of eggs arranged in like manner, till the jars are full. Eggs thus treated last March were found perfectly fresh and good, not adhering to the shell, and poaching well, this month, say 10 months after treatment.—T. T.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

THE attention of Parliament is being called to the neglect of the water companies to supply water in the metropolis on Sundays.

THE Mont-Cenis Railway, which had been temporarily closed owing to obstructions caused by severe falls of snow, has now been reopened for traffic.

A GENEROUS MINISTER.—A singular scene occurred in the Hungarian Parliament on the 11th ult., during the debate on the military budget. The Left having proposed that pensions should be given to the soldiers of the national militia (honveds) who took part in the insurrection of 1848-9, the Ministers energetically resisted the motion on the ground that no official recompense can be granted in such a case; but Count Andrassy, the premier, at the same time opened a private subscription for the soldiers in question, heading the list with the munificent donation of 10,000 florins. This step produced immense enthusiasm in the house, and several members at once stepped forward to put down their names on the list. In a very short time the sum of 32,000 florins was thus collected. The Minister of Finance, M. de Lonyay, subscribed 5,000 florins, and Deak 100 florins.

THE ABOLITION OF TOLL ON BATTERSEA BRIDGE.—A meeting has been held (Mr. W. H. Smith, M.P., in the chair), at the Board Room, Ebury Bridge, Pimlico, to consider what steps should be taken to procure the abolition of tolls on Battersea Bridge. Mr. Walter Taylor commented on the inconvenience and injustice the inhabitants on both sides of the water were put to. The beautiful park which was created could not be reached by those for whose recreation it had been provided without paying a tax. He considered that being bought with the public money they should have the benefit of it. When a deputation waited on Lord Palmerston in 1857, his lordship in reply stated that the question seemed to be an important one, and presented a bill, but it was thrown out in committee. They had a stronger claim than Kingston Bridge, and from a financial point of view the government would act wisely in abolishing these tolls. The chairman stated his willingness to forward the matter, and to assist the agitation in the movement. The resolutions put were all unanimously carried, and several names were called as members of the committee. The speeches of the several gentlemen who addressed the meeting all tended to one view. A vote of thanks being given to the honourable chairman, the meeting, after lasting about an hour and a half, then broke up.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. D.—Mix gum arabic with the starch.  
EMMA J.—You write a good hand.  
ALFRED E.—We cannot accede to your request.  
G. H. O.—We are sorry we cannot accommodate you.  
MABEL.—Bathe them repeatedly in lemon-juice and eau-de-Colognes.

NELLIE B.—The colour is dark brown; the handwriting neat.

GREEN.—Incorrect, as a moment's reflection will show.  
W. STREWDICK.—1. For four persons, it will cost you about fifty pounds. 2. The advertisement is genuine.

CLAUDE M.—Real meerschaum is distinguishable from artificial by the superior porosity and softness of the former.

EDWARD L.—Very good, although somewhat crude. A little more study and care; then the next will be better.

J. K. M.—We believe the matter dropped. When both parties are agreed, Cupid is propitious and points out the way.

UXBRIDGE.—We believe that the Crystal Palace is the only place of amusement open on Good Friday; the music hitherto performed there on that day has been chiefly of a sacred character.

S. K. M.—1. About seven thousand feet above the level of the sea. 2. Clip them with the scissors sparingly about once a month.

B. I. M.—Take as much active exercise as you can, and as little sleep and liquid as is consistent with health. Avoid sugar. There is great room for improvement in the writing.

A SWEETHEART.—You can try a mixture of strong soda and water; but we think your lover will prefer that you should not do so.

LOVE TOM'S epistle reads as if he were an expert in the art of drawing the long-bow. However, he should disregard the jeers referred to, and daily consume as much roast beef as he can conveniently digest.

C. A. B.—A little more care is requisite in your metre and in your assertions. The skylark does not sing before sunrise.

W. R. S. L.—It is not illegal to use any name; but it is wrong to sign documents in a name different to that by which the person is ordinarily known. At a distant time the proof of identity may be difficult or impossible if such a course be adopted.

ROLAND.—A youth, notwithstanding the death of his parents, must complete the term of his apprenticeship, and is liable to criminal proceedings if he attempt to act in opposition to the contract into which he entered when he was bound.

COUNTRY BELLE.—Patience is the only remedy. From the thickness of the growth it is evident that nature has been profuse in her bounties to you in this respect; but her restorative powers are in their effect gradual, and she will take time to replace what a while ago you were eager to get rid of.

A MOTHER.—For the present the lad should have a wooden leg made under the superintendence of the surgeon nearest to your residence. As time goes on you can be advised as to any alterations that may be necessary.

DAMON.—Hard work is the first requisite. The next is companionship with good, frank, cheerful, robust youths of his own age. With them, your boy should take suitable recreation, and at proper periods engage in the outdoor sports of the season. You should foster in him desirable habits by encouraging counsel and wholesome hopes of a modest reward.

EMILY R.—The soundness of building societies in general is reliable; before investing, however, you would of course well consider the character of the management and all the other details. A single woman is under no disability as to holding shares. It is quite correct to receive the presents, as it also is to keep "only a friend" at a friendly distance.

OPTHELIA.—MM. is an abbreviation of the French plural for the word gentlemen, that is Messieurs. A Doctor of Divinity is not necessarily a clergyman, which is a term applied exclusively to the ministers of the established church. Many of the non-conforming ministers of religion have received the degree of D.D. from American and other universities.

AUSTRALIAN.—The general registry of marriages is at Somerset House; the fee for a search is one shilling. An ordinary licence for a clergyman to marry can be obtained at Doctors' Commons for fifty shillings. By giving notice

to the registrar of any district the ceremony can be much more economically performed, but without religious rites. Marriage after banns published in a parish church is also less expensive than marriage by licence. The fees vary according to the condition in life of the parties.

MISKE ELMO.—We should say that the colour is a pretty light brown. The handwriting is very nice. The cost of a divorce is uncertain, and varies; consult a solicitor. The verses are pretty, but they are marred by the false sentiment of one line. It is unusual to consider anything more dear than honour, and certainly unpoetical to say so. The true feeling is expressed in that fine old sentiment,

"I could not love thee, dear, so well,  
"Loved I not honour more."

G. C.—To brown deer horns, get a sixpenny tube of burnt umber (from any artists' colourman) and mix some of it with turpentine, and apply it to the horns with a brush (leaving the points white). If a darker colour is required, a small quantity of van-dyke brown may be added. As the turpentine causes it to dry dull, there is no fear of any pearly look.

ELLA.—You will require a certificate of birth or baptism, but not a medical certificate. It is manifest that should the health of the proposed annuitant be infirm, that is a fact against himself and in favour of the office. By investing in consols and transferring those to the Government in consideration of the annuity, a yearly income, during a life, can be obtained of a value equal to about ten per cent. on the amount sunk. The National Debt office, in the Old Jewry, furnishes copious tables gratuitously to applicants.

E. M.—Without doubt the parties are in earnest, for such a want is inherent in humanity. Perhaps the enchantment which distance throws around the person ages may in some measure vanish as they become more closely acquainted, a result which their mother-wit brings about when once the desire takes root; but perhaps not for the yearnings of a nature that is waiting to love must be complied with. The red cross is indicative of the particular order of knighthood to which he belongs. The style of your handwriting leaves nothing to be desired on that score.

## VERSE.

Hail, early spring! when buds and blossoms shine,  
And new-born flowers make the earth divine!  
Almighty Ruler, who hast all things made,—  
The snow-cold heights, the grass upon the glade,  
The roaring forest, the low, murmuring rill,  
The stately oak, the heather of the hill,  
The unletter'd hind, and learning's sacred sire!  
Oh, tune the Muse, that, with true poet-fire,  
I may breathe forth the dear delights of spring,  
That to my soul with sweetest fragrance cling.  
Winter, adieu! I'll off to yonder plain,  
To bat with rapture to the lark's sweet strain,  
Fore with deep pleasure o'er the rippling rill,  
Or gather daisies from our own dear hill;  
Linger to watch still Eve's approaching car,  
While through the tree-tops shine the lover's star,  
And up the valleys steal the year's fair queen,  
To clothe all nature with a living green. J. H.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: Sir,—As dried watercress has been stated to possess all the virtues of tobacco without its vices, it may perhaps interest some of your readers to know the result of an experiment made by three old smokers. We invested in sixpennyworth of watercress, and carefully dried it in the oven, then reduced it to a convenient size for filling our pipes. Then we filled and smoked. All was silent for five minutes; then said the writer, "What do you think of it?" "It certainly isn't like 'bacca," said No. 2. "It smells like the water turnip greens have been boiled in," said No. 3. A few minutes more elapsed, then after much expectation all exclaimed, "It's nasty!" The pipes were laid aside, and we groaned and placed our hands on our waists. Then the writer suddenly was seized with a desire to see if it was freeing, the No. 3 remembered that he had a patient to see in the next street. No. 2 looked ghastly, but kept his seat. Now whether these effects arose from smoking the watercress in tobacco pipes, or whether from some emetic properties it possesses, I know not; but in clean or dirty pipe never will I smoke it again.—E. G.

ANNIE and ROSE.—"Annie," twenty, medium height, dark eyes, brown curly hair, pretty, a good figure, can play and sing. "Rose," eighteen, medium height, dark eyes, golden hair, pretty, a good figure, and can play and sing. Respondents must be tall and dark. Wish to exchange cards.

MAGGIE and MARY.—"Maggie," twenty-two, tall, dark, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and a sailor. "Mary," eighteen, a blonde, good tempered, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall, dark, and of music; a tradesman preferred.

R. P., thirty, 5ft. 11in., dark curly hair and whiskers, fond of music and poetry, and of a sanguine and cheerful temperament. Respondent must be about twenty-two, good looking, tolerably educated, and cheerful and agreeable.

BLACK DIAMOND, twenty-seven, 5ft. 5in., dark curly hair, hazel eyes, merry, good tempered, and an engineer's assistant. Respondent must have a good temper, and 50s. per annum.

E. B., seventeen, 5ft. 4in., dark hair and eyes, loving, cheerful, well educated, and fond of music. Respondent must be tall, fair, good looking, about twenty-one, and fond of home. Wishes to exchange cards.

SAD and LONELY requests the cards of those ladies who replied to him in No. 327, with intimation on the back how to communicate.

AGNES MERRIE, fair, pretty, clever, and in receipt of a small independence. Respondent must be amiable, and in easy circumstances.

BIRDIE, seventeen, medium height, blue eyes, dark hair, loving, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and not over twenty.

LOUISA, twenty-seven, medium height, kind, and fond of home; a widow, with one little girl.

MAGGIE, twenty, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, cheerful, and good tempered. Respondent must be tall, dark, and not over twenty-two.

NELLIE H., twenty-two, medium height, dark hair and eyes, and loving. Respondent must be tall and fair, with a good trade, and not over twenty-five.

W. K., twenty-six, 6ft. 11in., dark hair, whiskers, and moustache. Respondent must be dark and good tempered, with a little money.

JULIEN and GUSTAVE (artists).—"Julien," twenty-one, tall, fair, and handsome. "Gustave," twenty, tall, dark, and handsome. Respondents must be handsome and accomplished.

MABLE ANNIE, eighteen, medium height, dark, good looking, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good tempered, and fond of home; a grocer preferred.

MARTHA, nineteen, tall, and loving. Respondent must be tall, dark, nice looking, in good circumstances, and a clerk.

FLO and ALICE.—"Flo," twenty-one, brown hair, gray eyes, very tall, good teeth, and of a lively disposition. Respondent must be tall, gentlemanly, and of a kind disposition. "Alice," seventeen, medium height, dark brown hair, and blue eyes. Respondent must be tall and in a good position in life.

F. I. A. (a mechanic), nineteen, dark, 5ft. 6in., good looking, and of good family. Respondent must be from seventeen to nineteen, quiet disposition, and fond of home.

A. W., tall, dark hair and eyes, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be tall, dark, kind, and fond of home.

E. M., tall, blue eyes, fair hair, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be fair, tall, and good looking; a tradesman preferred.

A CLERK, twenty-two, curly hair, good looking, and good tempered. Respondent must be about twenty-one, dark, good tempered, and have a little money.

ANNIE and FANNY.—"Annie," eighteen, blue eyes, dark hair, 5ft. 6in., and rather stout. "Annie," seventeen, brown eyes, dark hair, 5ft. 5in. Both musical and domesticated. Respondents must be tall, dark, and not more than twenty-three; naval officers preferred.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

DRESSMAKER is responded to by—"Willy B.," thirty, tall, fair, of good family, and has a good income. Would like to receive cards.

SAD and LONELY by—"Primrose," twenty-two, fair, medium height, loving, domesticated, and musical. Would like cards.

J. W. J. by—"E. J.," twenty, 5ft. 6in., dark, a good housekeeper, and fond of home.

EMILY and ROSE by—"William and Joseph." GERTY by—"Young Squire," with all the qualifications she mentioned and a good income. Wishes to exchange cards.

FORSTER (R.N.) by—"A West Country Girl," nineteen, medium height, fair, quiet, devoted, and fond of home.

ROSE by—"F. W.," twenty, rather tall, good looking, dark, cheerful, with good expectations.

LINCETHILUX by—"Mai," fair complexion, gray eyes, brown hair, good teeth, and very tall; and—"White Camellia," a pretty blonde, twenty, loving, and accomplished. Wishes for a personal interview.

JACK FORSTER, E. H. MAINTACK, and TOM BOWLING—three sisters. Jack Forester by—"Dark-Eyed Milly," twenty, medium height, brown hair and eyes, lively, affectionate, and fond of home. E. H. Maintack by—"Annie," seventeen, medium height, dark brown hair, gray eyes, good looking, loving, and fond of home. Tom Bowling by—"Nettie," eighteen, medium height, fair hair, blue eyes, good looking, affectionate, and fond of home.

KATHLEEN MAYOVERTON by—"K." (an officer in H.M. Navy), medium height, dark eyes, auburn hair, with a good income. "K." is willing to exchange cards, and would like further particulars.

LONELY HENRY by—"Left Alone," twenty, medium height, dark, and fond of home and music.

LONELY HENRY (a mechanic) by—"Lone Lizzie," twenty-three, fair, black eyes, respectable, affectionate, and domesticated.

GERTY wishes to receive the cards of those ladies who have responded to him.

SAD and LONELY.—The enclosures have been received. MABLE and NELLIE wish "William and Harry" to make an appointment.

VIOLET would like to receive the cards of "H. R. P.," for which she would return her own.

POLLY will forward her cards to "J. E.," when retaken, and wishes for a personal interview if he will appoint time and place.

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London: Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by J. WATSON.